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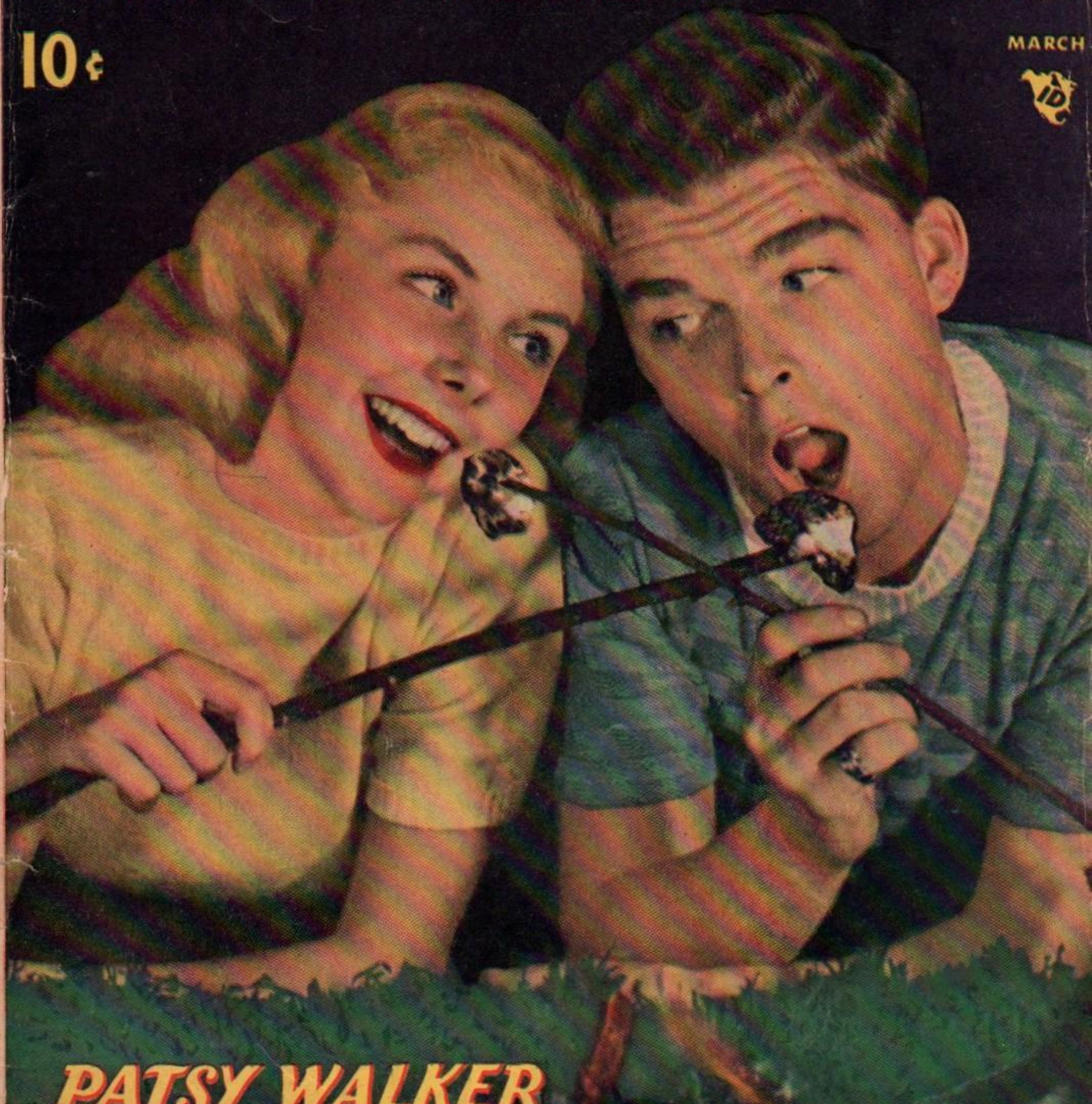

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COOKIE CRUMB CRUST

Roll enough lemon snaps, vanilla wafers or chocolate wafers to make 1 cup of crumbs. Mix well with 5 tablespoons melted butter. Cover bottom and sides of 8-inch pie pan, pressing firmly into place. Pour in filling.

FROZEN FUN . . .

Even though it's frozen, there's nothing chilly about this dessert when you taste its yum-yummy flavor. Again, it's quick and simple when you use a fudge mix.

¾ cup of a fudge mix
2 level tablespoons cornstarch
¼ cup sugar (optional)
1½ cups milk
1 cup evaporated milk
1 teasp. vanilla flavor

Mix dry ingredients, add fresh milk and bring to boil over gentle flame, stirring continuously. Remove from flame, set aside to cool and place in refrigerator. Pour evaporated milk into refrigerator freezing tray and freeze fast for 10 to 15 minutes. Pour into bowl (which has been put in refrigerator to chill) and whip. Fold in fudge mixture previously made, add vanilla and whip again. Pour into tray and fast freeze. Stir contents several times during freezing, scraping off frozen dessert from tray sides and mixing into contents of tray. Freeze for about 2 hours until firm, and serve.

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PATSY WALKER

IN "HEDY HORNS IN!"

-2619-

OUR SCENE OPENS IN THE JOURNALISM CLASS AT CENTERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL...
I JUST LOVE THIS CLASS! NEWSPAPER WORK IS SO GLAMOROUS!
SHHH--PATSY! MR. DAWES IS GOING TO SAY SOMETHING!

STUDENTS, I HAVE GOOD NEWS! THE DAILY BUGLE HAS ASKED ME TO CHOOSE ONE OF YOU TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL NEWSPAPER GUILD BALL AS THEIR GUEST!

HOWEVER, SINCE I WANT TO BE AS FAIR AS POSSIBLE, I WILL ASK THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED TO SUBMIT AN ESSAY AND THE BEST ONE WILL WIN!

LATER...

AND, BUZZ, THE WINNER WILL BE PERMITTED TO BRING SOMEONE - WILL YOU BE MY ESCORT?

SURE! I HEAR THOSE PARTIES ARE FUN!

PARDON ME, PATSY DEAR, BUT DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE A LITTLE OVER OPTIMISTIC? REMEMBER - *I* AM ENTERING THIS CONTEST *TOO!*

WE'LL *SEE* ABOUT THAT TOMORROW!

I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE NOW, BUZZ! I'M GOING TO WORK ALL NIGHT IF NEED BE!

S'LONG, PATSY! AND GOOD LUCK!

I SUPPOSE *YOU* ARE GOING TO WORK PRETTY HARD TONIGHT TOO, EH, HEDY?

WORK? OF COURSE NOT, SILLY! WORK IS FOR *PEASANTS!* I'M SURE I'LL WIN ANYWAY, AND IF YOU'RE SMART YOU'LL GO WITH ME!

SODA 15¢

LATE THAT NIGHT...

NANCY, LISTEN TO THIS! TELL ME HOW IT SOUNDS!

WHEW! THIS IS THE 50TH TIME! O.K.! SHOOT!

CENTERVILLE

I STILL THINK IT NEEDS A FEW CHANGES!

O.K.! BACK TO WORK *AGAIN!*

MEANWHILE... AT THE WOLFE RESIDENCE...

OH, DADDYKINS! WOULD 'OO DO YOUR 'ITTLE DIRL A DREAT BIG FAVOR?

HARUMPH! OF COURSE, HEDY, MY DEAR... WHAT *IS* IT?

STOCK EXCHANGE

WELL, DADDY, SINCE YOU OWN *STOCK* IN THE DAILY BUGLE, I THOUGHT YOU COULD KIND OF SEE TO IT THAT I'M INVITED TO THE NEWSPAPER GUILD'S BALL!

'WHY, I'M SURE THAT CAN BE ARRANGED EASILY ENOUGH!

HELLO? DAILY BUGLE? GIVE ME JOHNSON AT THE CITY DESK!

YES, MR. WOLFE! YOUR DAUGHTER WANTS TO GO TO THE BALL? CERTAINLY, SIR! I'LL BE GLAD TO ARRANGE IT, SIR! YESSIR! *YESSIR!* OF COURSE, SIR! FINE, SIR! GOOD-BY, SIR!

DAILY BUGLE

DAILY FOOL

P.B. JOHNSON-EDITOR

I'D BETTER CALL THAT TEACHER AT CENTERVILLE HIGH AND TELL HIM MISS WOLFE IS GOING!

P.B. JOHNSON-EDITO

BUT... THAT'S VERY UNFAIR! I'VE TOLD MY STUDENTS TO COMPETE FOR...

LISTEN, DAWES! J.B. WOLFE IS AN IMPORTANT MAN! WHEN HE SAYS TO INVITE HIS DAUGHTER, THEN THAT IS *EXACTLY* WHAT WE DO! GOOD-BY!

CLICK!

OF ALL THE CHEAP, LOW-DOWN TRICKS! BUT, I'VE GOT AN IDEA... I'LL CALL MY FRIEND, MAC, AT THE DAILY *GAZETTE!*

NEXT DAY AT SCHOOL...

...AND ABOUT THAT NEWSPAPER GUILD'S BALL... IT SEEMS HEDY WOLFE HAS BEEN "CHOSEN" BY THE *DAILY BUGLE!*

WELL, PATSY, I TOLD YOU *I'D* BE CHOSEN! IT'S JUST A CASE OF *SUPERIOR...* ER... ABILITY WINNING!

OHHHH... AND I WORKED *SO* HARD ON MY ESSAY!

HOWEVER... I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU NOW! I HAVE INTERESTED THE DAILY *GAZETTE* IN MAKING AN OFFER ALSO, AND SINCE THE *BEST* ESSAY WAS WRITTEN BY PATSY WALKER, SHE WILL GO TO THE BALL AS THAT PAPER'S GUEST!

CONGRATULATIONS, PATSY!

PATSY AND HEDY WILL BE GUEST REPORTERS ONE DAY THIS WEEK AND THE ONE WHO DOES THE BEST JOB WILL BE CROWNED QUEEN OF THE BALL!

THIS IS A DEVELOPMENT I DIDN'T EXPECT! PATSY WILL SURELY WIN UNLESS I CAN *PUT SOMETHING OVER* ON HER AGAIN!

MEANWHILE... IN ANOTHER PART OF TOWN...

LORD AND LADY UPDYKE? OH, YES, YOUR LORDSHIP... YOUR SUITE IS READY!

THANK YOU, MY GOOD MAN!

IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, ROGER?

YES, MAGGIE! I DON'T THINK ANYONE SUSPECTS A THING!

OH, BY THE WAY- WOULD YOU BE A GOOD FELLOW AND CALL US AT EIGHT! WE'RE INVITED TO A RECEPTION AT THE VAN GOLDROCK'S!

YES, YOUR LORDSHIP!

I'D BETTER CALL THE NEWSPAPERS! I MIGHT GET SOMETHING OUT OF IT!

LATER... AT THE DAILY GAZETTE...

MISS WALKER, AS GUEST REPORTER YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TO COVER THE VAN GOLDROCK RECEPTION PARTY!

YESSIR!

MACDUFF-EDITOR

AND AT THIS MOMENT AT THE DAILY BUGLE...

MISS WOLFE! YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TO COVER THE VAN GOLDROCK PARTY FOR LORD AND LADY UPDYKE!

O.K., CHIEFIE!

THAT EVENING...

GOLLY, I HOPE I CAN WRITE A GOOD STORY ON THIS AFFAIR! BUZZ WOULD BE SO PROUD IF I'M CROWNED QUEEN OF THE BALL!

HELLO, PATSY! SO YOU'RE ASSIGNED HERE, TOO, EH?

YES, HEDY! AND *NOW* YOU'LL HAVE TO RELY ON *ABILITY* INSTEAD OF *PULL!*

THAT'S WHAT *YOU* THINK, PATSY *DEAR!* I'LL THINK OF *SOMETHING!*

LATER... WHILE PATSY'S BUSILY WRITING, I'VE GOT TO FIGURE HOW TO CROSS HER UP! I'LL GO INTO A LIBRARY, WHERE IT'S QUIET!

HMMM... THIS GIVES ME AN IDEA!

INTERNATIONAL JEWEL THIEVES LEAVE EUROPE

OH, BOY! OH, BOY! THIS WILL FIX PATSY BUT GOOD!

LEAVE EUROPE

LATER... THERE'S PATSY AND SHE'S PROBABLY GOING TO TURN IN HER ARTICLE... I'VE GOT TO ACT FAST NOW!

OH, EXCUSE ME, PATSY!

OOF!

BUMP!

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, PATSY DEAR! HERE'S *YOUR NOTE-BOOK!*

THAT'S ALL RIGHT! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!

ACCIDENT, HA! I MANAGED TO SWITCH NOTEBOOKS THAT WAY AND WON'T YOU BE SURPRISED WHEN YOU READ THE STORY YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE WRITTEN IN TOMORROW'S PAPER!

NEXT DAY...

WELL, GIRLS, WHO WROTE THE BEST STORY?

I DID, OF COURSE, BUZZIE DEAR!

HEDY! YOU HAVE SOME NERVE! YOU COULD AT LEAST WAIT TILL THE PAPERS COME OUT!

HEY, BUZZ! HERE ARE YOUR BUGLES AND GAZETTES!

NOW, MISS WOLFE, WE'LL SEE WHO WROTE THE BEST ARTICLE AND WHO WILL BE QUEEN OF THE BALL!

WHAT THE-

DAILY GAZETTE

SOCIETY...
by Patsy Walker

I AM CONVINCED THAT LORD AND LADY UPDYKE ARE THE INTERNATIONAL JEWEL THIEVES WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR. I HOPE THE POLICE WILL DO SOMETHING ABOUT PUTTING THEM IN JAIL.

HA! HA! PATSY, WHILE BUZZIE AND I ARE AT THE BALL YOU CAN TRY EXPLAINING *YOUR* TERRIBLE HOAX AND INSULT! I'M SURE HIS LORDSHIP IS QUITE ANGRY!

OH!

SAY, IS THERE A YOUNG LADY HERE BY THE NAME OF PATSY WALKER?

I-I'M PATSY WALKER, O-O-OFFICER! I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED BUT...

IF YOU DON'T MIND, THEY WANT TO SEE YOU DOWN AT HEADQUARTERS!

I... I'LL GO QUIETLY! (SNIFF)

LATER...

...AND YOU'RE TO BE CONGRATULATED, MISS WALKER! WE FOLLOWED YOUR TIP AND YOU WERE RIGHT! ROGER AND MAGGIE UPDYKE ARE WANTED FOR JEWEL THEFTS ALL OVER EUROPE!

AND SO AT THE BALL...

I SEE HEDY DIDN'T EVEN COME TO THE BALL!

I THINK SHE'S TOO BUSY KICKING HERSELF!

THE END

STITCHIN' TIME

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SIZES
10—16

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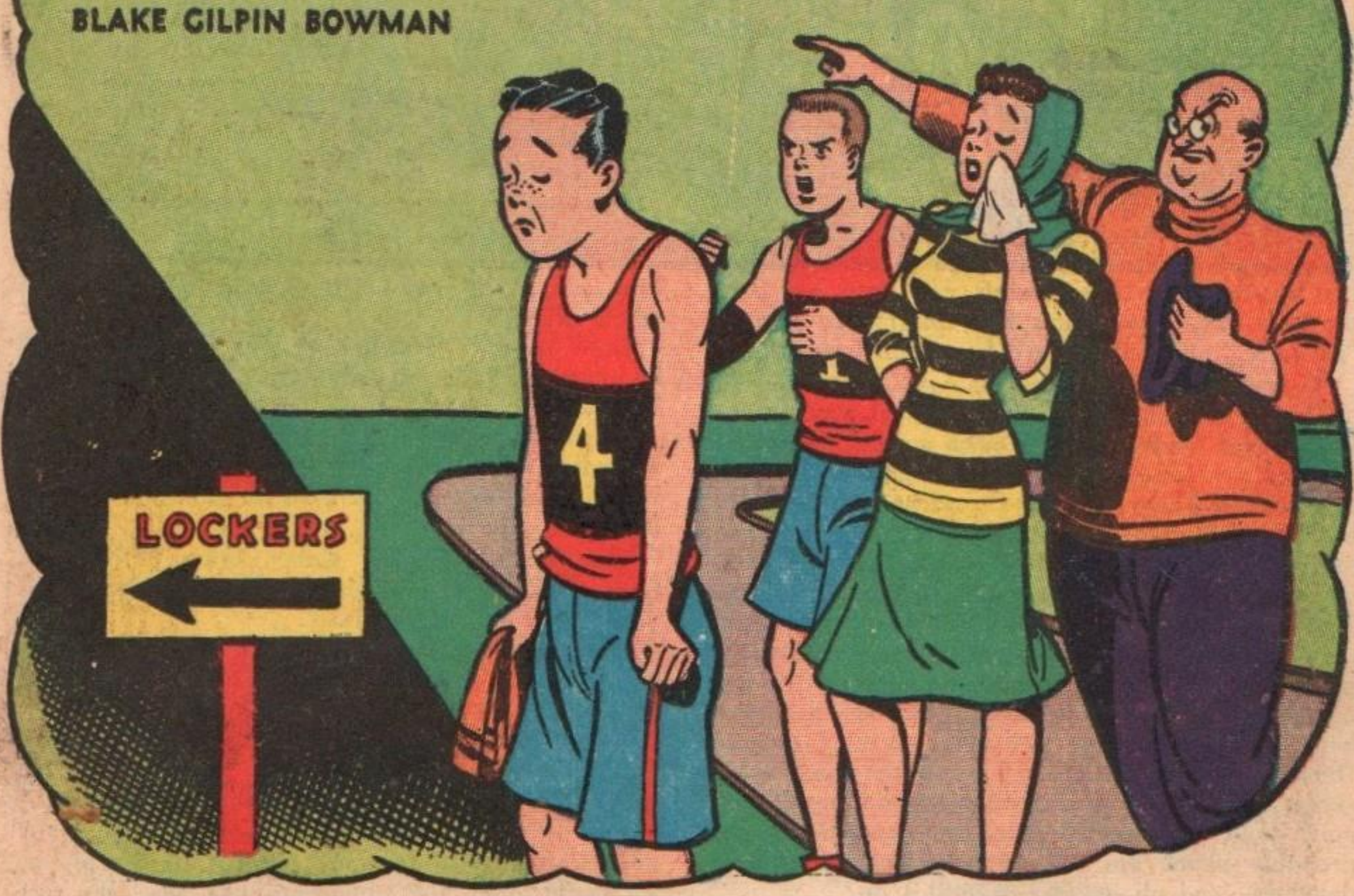
HOLLOW

WHEN A GIRL PINS HER HOPES ON A TRACK STAR, SHE HAS TO MAKE SURE HE STAYS IN THE RUNNING.

VICTORY

By
BLAKE GILPIN BOWMAN



CONNIE CREIGHTON paused at the foot of the stairs in great indecision. Cautiously she leaned forward to look through the dining room door to catch a glimpse of her father's back. The set of his shoulders was always a good gauge of the state of his disposition. Connie tried to assume a jaunty air as she walked into the room.

"Good morning, Mother," she said. Her mother smiled in answer. "Good morning, Daddy." Connie's voice was hopeful.

"Humph," answered Coach Creighton. His shoulders were very stiff. He kept his eyes fixed on the sports section of the skimpy Saturday morning paper as he finished the last of his coffee. With a short inarticulate mumbling, he balled up his napkin, shoved back his chair and strode off.

"Well!" Mrs. Creighton breathed as the front door slammed. "He certainly has himself in a dither about this meet. Is it so important?"

Connie rescued a piece of bread from the toaster before she answered. "He's not so upset about the meet as he is about his darling daughter—so-called," Connie said.

Mrs. Creighton smiled. "And what did you do to him?" she asked.

"I went dancing with Dunk Kingsley and we didn't get home until ten and it seems to be the deadliest of crimes to keep the shining hope of the track team up past nine o'clock."

"Ohhh." Mrs. Creighton pursed her lips in understanding. "Dunk Kingsley," she mused. "Isn't he the one they call 'Lubber'?"

"Can't people ever let that poor guy forget a mistake? That horrible nickname!" Connie exploded.

Dunk had been christened "Lubber" after a football game with the Academy last fall. He'd speared a long pass right out of the hands of the Academy secondary. The crowd had gone wild as he broke into the clear with less than twenty yards to go for a touchdown. Then he'd tripped, really on an untied shoe lace, he said, and Connie believed him, but from the stands he'd looked just plain clumsy. Lakeside

"And then we had a flat, and we never even got to the place we were going."

had lost the game by six points, and Dunk had been the goat. The newspapers had referred to him as "lubberly," and Lubber he'd been called ever since.

"Sorry," said Mrs. Creighton.

Then Connie mellowed. "Oh, Mom, it was a mess. Dunk asked me to go out to catch a quick dance last night. I guess we left before you came home from that supper. There was some band he wanted me to hear. And, Mother, it's the first time he's ever asked me out dancing—I actually thought maybe he was working up to asking me to the big dance tonight. And we really meant to be home very early. And then we had a flat, and we never even got to the placed we were going. And we couldn't get the tire fixed, and it was ten o'clock before we got back here. And we ran into Dad who was mad because Dunk is the only miler he has for the meet today except for a couple of freshmen who aren't any good. And Dad bawled Dunk out, and Dunk will probably blame me just because I'm the coach's daughter—and oh, jeepers, what'll I do?"

"Take a breath," Mrs. Creighton suggested. She stood up and began to gather the breakfast dishes. "Help me with these things, and then run on over to the meet. Maybe dear old Lakeside will win anyhow."

"Hi!" Dunk called. He was waiting as Connie walked up to the entrance of the track.

Her spirits immediately lifted. She'd had her eye on Dunk for a couple of years, but—oh, he was friendly enough, but still athletic, serious and unobtainable. At least he had been until his suggestion of last night . . .

And as if he read her thoughts, Dunk said, "I'm sorry about what I let you in for last night."

"Don't be silly," Connie retorted. "After all he's my father. *I* should be apologetic."

Dunk shrugged. "He's also the track coach, and I *did* break training. He has to take these things seriously—after all, it's his job."

The world looked brighter to Connie. If Dunk was going to defend Dad's attitude, maybe everything would be all right. "All you have to do is win for him today," she said brightly, "and he'll forget the whole thing."

Dunk winced. "You haven't seen the scoreboard," he muttered. "The last event, the mile, is coming up. Sure, right now the High has 24 points and the Academy has 20. Which means that I have to place second to sew up the meet. Three points for second will give us twenty-seven. Five for first and one for third will give them only twenty-six."

The clouds began to gather again. "Oh," said Connie. "But you can take a second all right, can't you?" she queried hopefully.

"Sure, sure," said Dunk ruefully. "The coach says I have to, but Academy's Chanders has been turning in 4:28 and 4:29 all season. Their other top runner, Bob Anderson, usually can clock a mile in 4:30. And the best I've ever done is 4:30.5." He kicked at the ground. "I'll be lucky to take a third."

The gloom clouds had completely blackened by now. Connie tried to smile through them. "Maybe we could dope the opponents like they do race horses," she suggested.

"Or have someone in the grandstands take pot-shots at them," Dunk teased back at her. Then he reached out and squeezed her arm. "Don't worry. I'll bring home the points *somehow*." His glance shot over her shoulder. "Say, there's that bandleader I was telling you about. Excuse me, Connie. I have to see him for a minute."

Connie watched him fondly as he hurried over to a little fat guy who was carrying an instrument case. She watched for a minute as they talked, then saw Dunk press something into the other's hand. Suddenly she felt that she was rudely eavesdropping and hurried on into the meet.

The runners were lined up now, three from Lake Academy and three from Lakeside High. Dunk looked all lean power to Connie. She tensed anxiously as she waited for the start of the final event in the great traditional track meet. Then the starter's gun cracked. The runners lunged forward, and Dunk got off in fourth place. Darrel Chanders of the Academy strode easily into the lead.

In all honesty, Connie had to admit to herself that Dunk's running was anything but stylish to watch. Compared to Chanders, whose effortless pace was a coach's dream, Dunk did seem—well—even lubberly. By contrast to Chander's fluid motion, Dunk's plodding manner was that of a truck horse competing with a Kentucky Derby winner.

Starting the second lap, Chanders had a twenty-five yard lead over his teammate Anderson, who in second place was five yards ahead of the High's freshman runner Bud Bishop. Dunk was still running fourth.

"Go after 'em, Dunk," Connie muttered under her breath. She wanted to shout it but somehow couldn't. She wondered why it was so important to her that plodding Dunk should win out. Something about his very seriousness, something about his straightforward, clean-cut manner—maybe the same thing that made her father pin his hopes on him. Dunk wasn't as smooth as Darrel Chanders, but somehow he seemed—well, more real. She gave up trying to analyze her feelings.

End of the second lap now, and the positions were unchanged. She saw her father lean forward and shout at Dunk as he lumbered past. "Make a bid for it. You can do it, Dunk," Coach Creighton yelled. "They're wearing down."

The freshman runner faded, and Dunk went after second-place Anderson. Dunk swerved toward the center of the track and fought forward. Connie's heart ached as she saw his face contort in effort. He was abreast of Anderson now, then he flailed past, with his arms reaching out as though he were trying to pull himself along hand over hand on an invisible rope. He was ahead of Anderson now. If only he could hold the lead.

Connie moved up beside her father at the starting line. Coach Creighton's face was bathed in perspiration as if he had been running himself. "Keep moving, Dunk," he called. "Anderson's right behind you."

"Go to it, Dunk, go to it," Connie yelled, but her voice was drowned out by the roar of the crowd and the crack of the gun as Chanders started his last lap.

And then it happened. The music sounded so loudly out of place that the impression was that it had been blared into the quiet of a church service instead of into the screams of a crowd. Connie's eyes darted over to the far stands. She saw the little fat guy's face framing his trumpet, solidly sending out a chorus of *There'll Be A Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight.* As Chanders came past, a trombone wailed and a drummer started beating out a terrific tempo. Two saxes were improvising like mad. They swung into a jazz version of *Hail to the Chief.*

Chander's evenly-timed stride faltered as if he had been struck. He seemed to struggle to regain his tempo, but the blare of the swing music, completely out of phase with his pace, threw him off. He couldn't seem to recapture his smooth rhythm, and desperation seemed to make him change to a sprint. Those few seconds of hesitation were a gift to Dunk. He moved up, closed the gap and took over the lead. He, too, switched to a sprint, his dash a floundering drive of legs and arms in a weird but effective gallop. The band swung into *After You've Gone* as Dunk pounded across the finish line and collapsed.

Lakeside High rooters went wild. Torn programs, hats and pennants filled the air. Connie floated up to her father, whose mangled felt was pushed back on his head the way he wore it when his teams won. She was beside him as he helped Dunk up.

"Well, boy, you did it. Four minutes, twenty-eight and nine-tenths seconds," Coach Creighton crowed.

Dunk just smiled.

"Look at the scoreboard!" the coach went on. The three of them turned toward it—and their smiles faded.

The scoreboard was blank.

The loudspeaker bellowed, "Coach Creighton and Duncan Kingsley, please report immediately to the judges' stand."

"We better go on over and see what they want, Dunk," Coach Creighton said. "Wait here," he said and walked over to the group of judges who were in a huddle with Darrel Chanders.

"Could it be we have a bad loser?" Connie whispered to Dunk.

Dunk just raised his eyebrows.

"Come here, Dunk," Coach Creighton's voice barked out. The coach's hat was being tortured in his hands. His smile was gone. Connie and Dunk hurried over to him. "Do you know that character Tubby Jordan, the one whose band played here this afternoon?" the coach asked as they came up.

"Well, sure," said Dunk.

The coach stared at him intently. "Chanders claims you gave Jordan ten dollars just before the race. Is that true?"

Dunk looked nervously at Connie and opened his mouth to answer, but Darrel Chanders cut in before he could say anything. "Sure, it's true. I saw him slip Tubby Jordan the ten spot. He couldn't win fairly so he had to cheat.

Connie felt frozen to the ground. She just stared ahead of her and she heard her father's hard even

"Go to it, Dunk, go to it," Connie yelled.

Connie gave Tubby a firm shove toward the judges' stand.

voice, as if from a great distance, saying, "It means disqualification if you deliberately planned this music stunt to throw Chanders off his running stride, but I want you to tell me the truth. Did you give Jordan ten dollars?"

Connie watched the crimson flush creep up Dunk's face. She heard him say, "Yes, I gave him ten dollars, but . . ." Dunk stopped. He shook his head. "I can't tell you why."

"You mean you have no explanation to offer?" One of the judges asked. "But you did pay the band leader?"

"That's right." Dunk's face was covered with embarrassment, but he lifted his chin proudly—or could it be arrogantly?

"I presume you withdraw this runner, Mr. Creighton," the judge said.

"Yes, of course," Coach Creighton answered.

Connie didn't wait for any more. She turned away from Darrel Chanders' smug smile and Dunk's stoney expression and ran. The words she'd been saying to herself earlier—"straightforward, clean-cut"— mocked at her brain. She collided with someone blindly.

"Sorry, Connie," the person said.

Connie did a double take. It was the little fat guy with the trumpet case; it was Tubby Jordan. "How did you know my na . . ." she started to ask. Then changed her mind and blurted, "Dunk paid you some money before this meet, didn't he?"

Tubby looked uncomfortable. He just nodded.

Connie grabbed his arm. "Why, Tubby? Why?" she demanded.

Tubby squirmed. "He didn't want me ever to tell anyone, especially you. Not ever. He made me promise."

"Tubby, you *have* to tell me!" she all but shouted at him.

"Well, it was just because he wanted to make an impression on you."

Tears crowded into Connie's eyes. "Oh, what do I care about track meets?" she wailed in exasperation.

"Who's talking about track meets?"

Connie looked at him wide-eyed. "Go on," she breathed.

"Well, may Dunk forgive me." Tubby hesitated but continued under the demanding pressure of her eyes. "He's been paying me to give him dancing lessons. The thing is: A, he wanted to get himself graceful and junk that nickname 'Lubber'; and B, he wanted to ask you to the dance tonight. Hasn't he asked you? He's gotten pretty good after ten of my *ex*-pert lessons."

Connie ignored his question. "And Dunk didn't know you were going to play this afternoon?" she asked in a whisper.

"Play? Of course not. Guess me and the boys just got kind of excited about the race. Maybe we shouldn't have done it, huh?" Tubby grinned at her, his face curving into gay wrinkles.

Connie's next words sounded as if she were thinking out loud. "I bet Dunk's not telling about the dancing lessons because he's afraid of being laughed at again!" And then more loudly, "Or maybe he's mad at all of us because we even suspect him . . . Oh, the beautiful dope!"

"Huh?" said Tubby. "What gives?"

Connie gave Tubby a firm shove toward the judges' stand. "But when you tell your story, Dunk can't be blamed," she shouted. "This makes it all just Chanders' hard luck! Tubby Jordan, you run over and tell that story to the judges—and fast!"

"Hey," protested Tubby, "hasn't there been enough running around here for one afternoon?"

"Never mind—you run," Connie ordered.

. . . A few minutes later when the scores went up —Lakeside High—29, Lake Academy—24, the cheers were deafening. But not so deafening that she wouldn't be able to hear the invitation to the Victory dance, Connie thought, as she went to meet the self-consciously smiling Dunk. THE END

PATSY WALKER

IN "LOVE IS NO MISTAKE!"

PATSY! BUZZ IS HERE!

TELL HIM I CAN'T SEE HIM NOW! I'M ALL *TIED UP* AT THE MOMENT!

FIRST AID

PLASTER OF PARIS

COTTON

2566

HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ANY STUDYING FOR THE HYGIENE EXAM, PATSY?

NO, AND WE'D BETTER GO TO MY HOUSE AND DO SOME STUDYING NOW!

1

OH, IT'S YOU, PATSY! HAVE YOU SEEN MICKEY ANYWHERE?

YES, MOTHER! HE WAS PLAYING FOOTBALL OVER AT JONES' LOT! BY THE WAY, WE'RE GOING UP TO MY ROOM TO STUDY!

MARY! MARY! I'VE GOT WONDERFUL NEWS--JUST WAIT'LL YOU HEAR THIS!

WELL, I HAVE BAD NEWS-- MICKEY IS OUT PLAYING--

FIRST, DEAR, LET ME TELL YOU THIS! I'VE BEEN NOMINATED FOR ***CHAIR-MAN*** OF THE ***CHILDREN'S BETTERMENT LEAGUE!*** ISN'T THAT TERRIFIC?

WELL, THAT'S JUST FINE! YOU CAN START ***BETTERING*** YOUR OWN CHILD AT ONCE--MICKEY IS PLAYING FOOTBALL AGAINST MY WISHES AGAIN!

BUT FOOTBALL'S GOOD FOR THE BOY, DEAR--IT'LL MAKE A MAN OUT OF HIM! WHY, WHEN I WAS A BOY, I ALWAYS--

IT'LL MAKE A **ROUGHNECK** OUT OF HIM, YOU MEAN!

UH--H-HULLO, MOTHER--HULLO, DAD!

MICKEY! SEE WHAT I MEAN, STANLEY? YOU MUST DO SOMETHING AT ONCE!

NOW YOU TAKE HIM UPSTAIRS AND DISCIPLINE HIM AT ONCE, STANLEY! AND I'M SURE HE NEEDS SOMETHING ***MORE*** THAN JUST A ***TALKING TO!***

WELL-L-L, ALL RIGHT, DEAR! I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

I WONDER WHO THAT COULD BE?

RRRING!

GOOD AFTERNOON, MRS. WALKER! WE ARE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN'S BETTERMENT LEAGUE...

COME IN, LADIES!

WE JUST DROPPED BY TO ASSURE YOUR HUSBAND THAT WE WILL SUPPORT HIM FOR CHAIRMAN! HE IS **SO** WONDERFUL WITH CHILDREN!

PLEASE BE SEATED, LADIES! MY HUSBAND IS UPSTAIRS DISCIPLINING OUR SON!

TAKE THAT, MICKEY! AND ***THAT***--AND ***THAT***!

OW! HELP! MURDER! OUCH!

POW!

WHAM!

WELL... DON'T YOU THINK HE'S BEING A LITTLE HARSH?

OH-- ER-- UH-- IT SOUNDS LIKE MUCH MORE THAN IT REALLY IS! HA, HA, HA!

OH-- ER-- PATSY, DEAR! WILL YOU PLEASE COME DOWN AND HELP ME WITH REFRESHMENTS?

I CAN'T HELP RIGHT NOW! DADDY'S HELPING ME WITH--

PLEASE, PATSY-- I'LL ONLY NEED YOU A MINUTE! NOW HURRY DOWN, DEAR!

WELL--ALL RIGHT!

--AND, LADIES, THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, PAT...

EEK!

OH!

EXCUSE MY APPEARANCE... DADDY DID THIS BECAUSE--

ALL RIGHT, MICKEY! NOW YOU MARCH RIGHT DOWN THE STAIRS AND TELL YOUR MOTHER YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON!

?

?

?

Y-YES, F-FATHER! BUT DON'T BEAT ME WITH THAT BASEBALL BAT AGAIN!

EEK!

DADDY PUNISHED ME, MOM! I'LL BE A GOOD BOY FROM NOW ON!

OH!

WE'VE SEEN ENOUGH, MRS. WALKER! WE CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND CAN FORGET ABOUT EVER BEING ELECTED CHAIRMAN! WHAT'S MORE, WE'LL SEE THAT HE'S THROWN OUT OF THE LEAGUE AT ONCE!

WHAT DID ALL THOSE WOMEN WANT, DEAR?

YOU'D BETTER SIT DOWN, STANLEY! WHEN I TELL YOU, I DON'T THINK YOU'LL FEEL SO WELL!

A SHORT WHILE LATER . . .

--AND THAT'S THE WHOLE STORY, DEAR! PLEASE DON'T TAKE IT SO HARD!

OHH-- AND I WAS SO SURE OF GETTING ELECTED, TOO! I'M A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES!

PSST-- MICKEY BZZZ-ZZZ!

O.K., PATSY! IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO!

LATER...

WHY, YOU'RE THE WALKER CHILDREN! YOU POOR DEARS! I SUPPOSE YOU CAME TO SEEK SHELTER FROM THAT BRUTAL FATHER OF YOURS!

NO, LADIES! YOU'VE GOT EVERYTHING ALL WRONG! WE CAN EXPLAIN EVERYTHING!

AND DADDY ONLY ***MADE BELIEVE***. THAT HE WAS PUNISHING ME! ACTUALLY HE WAS HITTING THE BED WITH A BAT AND I WAS YELLING TO FOOL MOM! I GOT BANGED UP LIKE THIS IN FOOTBALL!

AND I WAS PRACTISING MY ***FIRST AID COURSE*** WITH NANCY! DADDY CAME IN AND HELPED PUT ON THE BANDAGES!

NEXT WEEK, AFTER MR. WALKER HAS BEEN ELECTED CHAIRMAN...

WELL, MR. ***CHAIRMAN,*** WHAT WILL BE YOUR FIRST OFFICIAL ACT AS HEAD OF THE CHILDREN'S BETTERMENT LEAGUE?

I'M GOING TO TREAT TWO OF THE SWELLEST KIDS IN TOWN TO A SHOW AND ALL THE ICE CREAM THEY CAN EAT!

THE END

Romance at the Rapids

By GEDDES LAIRD

TONI KNEW THE NORTH WOODS AND THE PERILOUS RIVER TRIP BY HEART — BUT KENT'S GREEN EYES WERE SOMETHING NEW.

IN the bow of the canoe Antoinette MacNair dipped her paddle into the glimmering waters of the Tiger River with swift sure strokes. The first morning rays stroked vibrant lights into her dark curly hair, warmed her gold-tanned skin.

On both shores dark reaching pines and slender birches crowded the river banks, like spectators gathered to watch a parade. Birds tossed blithe song into the waking wilderness. Always this had been the hour Toni loved best, to which her heart never failed to respond.

Until this morning. Today the dawn magic failed. Toni was aware only of the resentful pair of green eyes behind her, stabbing at her slender back. Kent Ross's eyes.

Don't think about it. It doesn't matter what he thinks. Remember, this is just a job to you—a money-making job. For Uncle Rory.

At the thought of Uncle Rory, Toni's chin trembled. Then her lips tightened. Kent Ross's attitude was so unfair. It wasn't as if she weren't capable. She knew these wilds like the inside of her own cabin. Hadn't she been brought up here in the North? Hadn't she gone on trips with Uncle Rory ever since she'd come to live with him, a lonely orphan of five? Part French, part Scotch, didn't the blood of gallant voyageurs sing in her veins? She was lithe, quick, experienced—good as any boy. Better than many.

Only Kent Ross didn't think so. Probably he didn't like her looks. Just because she wasn't like the pale city girls he was used to, the ones she admired wistfully in magazine pictures and despaired of ever resembling.

During the two days they'd been en route to Caribou Lake, riding the streams, portaging, making camp under twinkling stars, Kent Ross had spoken to her only when absolutely necessary. He wasn't impolite exactly. He must have acted as if she weren't there.

Toni remembered how, day before yesterday, waiting on the rough platform at Jumping Horse, she'd been torn with eagerness and anxiety . . .

Her thick-lashed blue eyes darkened with excitement as the train came curling round the bend, puffed to a stop. She rushed forward.

"Hello, Mr. Ross!" Then she stopped, in confusion. Mr. John Ross wasn't alone. A tall, lean boy was swinging down the train steps after him.

"Well, if it isn't little Toni!" John Ross gave her a friendly hug—held her off. "How you've grown, girl—a regular young lady. Did you do all that in two years? But still a tomboy, too, I see!"

Toni flushed. For the first time, she was painfully conscious of patched dungarees, faded plaid shirt, the dark windblown tangle of her hair.

John Ross drew the strange boy forward, said heartily, "Toni, this my son, Kent. He's been looking forward to his first trip in the wilderness."

"I'll say!" Kent grinned. Then, "Hey—just smell this air!"

"Better than any store-bought perfume in the world," Toni said softly, sending Kent a shy exploratory glance. Bristly red hair he had, surprising green eyes, freckles and a definite chin.

"Where's old Rory?" John Ross asked expectantly. "Waiting at the cabin?"

Toni swallowed. Here it was. "Mr. Ross, I have to tell you—Uncle Rory's in the hospital, at Fort St. John."

"In the hospital!" John Ross's jaw dropped. "What——"

"Leg's fractured. Day before yesterday—too late for me to write you." Toni shook her head ruefully. "First accident he's had in years—he's raving mad about it."

The concern on Mr. Ross's face changed to a grin. "I can just hear him!" He rubbed his jaw. "That's tough luck for him—and for us, too."

"Yes." Toni swallowed. "He said to tell you how sorry he is."

John Ross turned gloomily to his son. "Won't be the same without old Rory as guide. I particularly wanted you to know him. Well——," he looked uncertainly at Toni, "I don't suppose you could recommend another guide, could you?"

Toni nodded breathlessly. "Why, yes, I know one."

"Good!"

"M-me."

"You!" Young Kent was horrified. "You're kidding—you're a girl!"

Toni lifted her chin. "But also a darned good guide." She turned, spoke to his father earnestly. "Mr. Ross, your letter said you wanted to fish Caribou

Toni flushed. For the first time, she was painfully conscious of patched dungarees, faded plaid shirt, the dark windblown tangle of her hair.

Lake. Only Uncle Rory and I know the choice fishing spots—and the quickest way in. I've been on trips with you and Uncle Rory before. You know I'm reliable."

The older man hesitated. His gaze went past her pleading face to his son. He frowned.

"I'd like to hire you, Toni—only——"

"Please, Mr. Ross." Her voice trembled. "You won't be sorry—I promise." She had to have this job—had to. Uncle Rory wouldn't be able to work the rest of the summer, and he needed money for hospital expenses badly.

Mr. Ross's hand fell on her shoulder understandingly. "All right, Toni. The job's yours."

"But, Dad——" began Kent, aghast.

"It's settled," said John Ross firmly. "Good guides are scarce. We're lucky Toni is willing to help us out."

Kent Ross hadn't said any more after that, but she could feel his thoughts, resenting her.

She started now, as he spoke behind her. "Let me paddle."

"But——" she began.

Well, why not? The Tiger was still calm. She'd take over again when they reached Rock Point and the narrows. It was safe enough now to let him try his hand. Besides, John Ross was paddling stern.

Moving carefully, they made the change. Toni's heart lifted. Passing her. Kent had smiled fleetingly. Did that mean—no, of course not! He was just pleased to be getting into action. Hard for a boy to sit still for long, doing nothing.

"When we get to the fork, I'll take it again," she said.

Kent didn't answer.

Settling herself, Toni found herself staring at Kent's back as he had at hers. Wide shoulders for his age, fairly expert with the paddle. But oversure. That was his trouble. But no matter. The Tiger was still on good behavior.

Resolutely, Toni turned her eyes from the disturbing Kent to the familiar but ever breathtaking scenery. Peace brooded over the river and through miles and miles of far-reaching wilderness. But Toni wasn't deceived. Before long the now lazing river would begin to stir, show its white teeth, challenge the passage of the lone canoe with its three occupants. Maybe that was why the trees crowded close on the narrowing banks—in order not to miss the perilous struggle.

For the first time Toni felt the full impact of the responsibility she had shouldered. Doubt struck at her. Maybe—maybe they should have cut overland instead of running the rapids. But John Ross hadn't wanted to. He'd been in a hurry to reach Caribou Lake, make the most of a brief vacation. Besides, she'd run the Tiger before—only then Uncle Rory had been along.

In the stern John Ross boomed cherrfully, "Wonderful morning!"

"Isn't it?" returned Toni.

"This is the life—eh, son?"

"You bet!" Kent's answer was enthusiastic.

Toni's heart lifted. So, after all, the wilderness was getting to him. She was glad she had let him paddle. Maybe when he began to pull those big ones out of the lake, he'd even forget he had taken a dislike to her.

Mr. Ross, too, was thinking ahead. "How's fishing this year?"

"Better than ever," Toni told him. "Northerns, wall-eyes, bass, muskies—bigger and scrappier."

"Sounds all right!"

How she hoped it would be!

The channel was narrowing now, the banks growing steeper. Now they had to tilt their heads to see the sky-pricking pines, the pale shimmer of poplars. Between canyon shadows the river flashed and sparkled under the climbing sun.

"Magnificent," said Mr. Ross. "You can't beat this country."

"No, you can't," Toni said surely. Then she spoke to Kent's back. "We're nearing Rock Point."

No answer.

"I'll take over now," she said, more loudly.

"No, thanks. I like to paddle."

Toni bit her lip. "But you don't understand! We're coming to white water! Dangerous rapids—whirlpools. Only experts run this stretch."

"I'm doing O.K.," Kent said. "Don't get excited."

Toni caught her breath.

"Kent," called Mr. Ross sharply, "Toni knows the channel—you don't. Let her take it. This isn't child's play."

A dark flush crawled up Kent's neck. His paddle faltered, jerked, slashed angrily at the ruffling water.

"I'm stayng here!" he flung back.

Ahead lay the white line of the first rapids. "Please," said Toni, trying not to sound as desperate as she felt, "we've really got to change now, before the river gets any rougher. It won't be safe later on."

Kent laughed shortly. "Sounds interesting!"

"Kent——" began his father.

"Kent!" cried Toni. "Watch out—that branch!"

Just in time the canoe swerved. They missed the drifting limb by inches, rounded the point. Ahead—white water!

Toni gripped the sides of the canoe, hands aching for the paddle. Why, oh why, had she let that stubborn idiot take the bow in the first place? Now it was too late. Suicide to change now, even if Kent should be willing.

In a rush, they were in the thick of it! The Tiger snarled, roared, clawed at the frail craft riding its back. Faster and faster it ran, like a live thing, determined to throw the intruders into a yawning whirlpool, smash them against jutting rocks. Behind, in the stern, Mr. Ross grunted alarm.

"Kent—that submerged log! Quick—to the right! Now—to the left—that whirlpool!" Toni heard her own voice as in a nightmare, crying directions.

He did what she said. He was at least alert. She guessed he hadn't dreamed it would be this bad, was regretting his wilfulness. Faster . . . faster . . . the Tiger was running wild. Even Toni had never seen it like this. Recent rains had swelled it, increasing its rage. In a fury now, it flung spray in their faces, tried to blind them.

"Watch out, Kent—that branch!"

The canoe missed again, miraculously, trembled on the yawning rim of a whirlpool, slid past, avoided rocks by hairbreadths. Toni drew an aching breath. Maybe . . . maybe, after all, Kent knew what he could do. Maybe, heaven helping, he'd bring them through!

Above the rushing river, she heard his young exultant laugh.

Then—"Kent, that log!"

They struck head on. The shattered canoe swayed, shuddered, toppled them overboard. Toni felt the cold terrible embrace of the triumphant Tiger as icy water closed over her head.

Gasping, fighting, she kicked her way to the surface, blinked streaming eyes. Slashing out against the current pulling downstream, she made out the dark shape of a rock ahead. She flung out an arm, then another, grasped at the slippery surface, slipped off, grabbed once more, and clung there, panting.

Her eyes searched frantically for the others, found a wet red head bobbing not far away, strong boy's arms slicing the current. Kent. Thank heaven. He reached a log caught fast between two boulders, hung on to it, coughing.

But—Mr. Ross? Toni's throat tightened again. No other head visible. No sight of him anywhere. No . . . there . . . half hidden by a huge rock, a dark inert arm.

"Mr. Ross!"

Slipping from her own safe bulwark, she struck out fiercely into midstream. Kent shouted something. She didn't look back. No time to waste. Struggling closer, she saw that part of the older man's shirt had snagged on a sharp branch, was holding him. He was unconscious, had probably struck his head when the canoe capsized.

The frustrated Tiger was tugging at him hungrily, trying to pull him free. Moments were precious.

The rest was a nightmare. Just as she reached him, the cloth ripped. She flung her arms out, grasping him. The heavy weight of his suddenly released body almost drew both of them into the boiling rapids.

Drawing on every ounce of her waning strength, Toni kept hold of him, grabbed the branch, held on. Her heart thundered in her chest. Her straining throat burned. She couldn't hold on much longer, couldn't . . .

The burden eased. Kent! He'd come to help. He shouted something. Then the two of them, Mr. Ross's form between them, were fighting the Tiger again, struggling to reach shore. From branch to rock, from log to log, until finally their feet touched bottom.

Exhausted, they fell to their knees in shallow water. Dear heaven, safe . . . safe at last!

"Dad!" choked Kent. "He's not——?"

Together they dragged Mr. Ross entirely out of water, then worked over him, by turns. At last, returning consciousness brought a groan from the man.

"Dad, Dad!" Kent's mouth worked. "Are you okay?"

"Wh-where—how—what happened?" asked Mr. Ross weakly.

"Dad, Toni just saved your life," Kent said humbly.

"I couldn't have done it alone, Mr. Ross," Toni said quickly. "I guess you struck your head when—when the canoe tipped."

John Ross smiled wanly. "Sorry, kids——"

"Sorry!" Kent cried. "I'm the one who's sorry, dad! Terribly. Believe me. Forgive me, too, dad—if you can."

His father struggled to sit up. "Of course, son."

Kent swallowed, turned to Toni. "Dad was right," he said. "It wasn't child's play." He looked out at the turbulent river with new respect.

Toni smiled back, without speaking.

After a moment, he stumbled on, "You see, dad promised me this wilderness trip a long time ago. Gave it the old he-man build up. No women, naturally. Just he and I and your marvelous Uncle Rory he'd talked so much about. I had it all set in my mind."

"Then," said Toni, "I barged in and spoiled it."

"That's what I thought," he said apologetically, "but not any more. Toni—you're tops! I won't forget, ever. You've changed my whole idea of girls—well, of one girl, anyhow."

"I'm glad," Toni murmured.

"But I'll never forgive myself for being so pig headed——"

Toni said gently, "Uncle Rory says anyone can make mistakes, but it takes real character to admit and correct them."

The eyes of both father and son thanked her, wordlessly.

After a moment, she said levelly, "We have to decide what to do now—whether to return to Uncle Rory's cabin, the shorter distance, or go on to Caribou Lake. There are supplies in the shack there, tackle, rods—a boat. But, of course, maybe you don't want——"

"How about you, dad?" Kent asked anxiously.

"I'll be all right. What do you want to do?"

"Heck," said Kent, grinning eagerly, "I want to go on to Caribou Lake, just like we planned."

"It's not an easy trek," Toni warned, but her spirits soared.

Kent shrugged, eyes crinkling at her admiringly. "We should worry," he said. "We've got a good guide."

THE END

"Dad!" choked Kent. "He's not?"

GIBLET GIMMICK . . .

Feel up to trying something off-the-beaten track? From New Orleans comes this recipe for GIBLET SOUP.

You can usually get all the giblets you want from the "chicken by the piece" dealer, so you don't have to go to the expense of buying the birds themselves.

Chop up one onion fine, and brown it in a pan with a tablespoon of butter. Then add a carrot and a turnip, chopped, the juice of a lemon, and a bay leaf. Now put in the whole giblets—say 4 each of livers, hearts and gizzards. Be careful that all doesn't burn. When browned, slit the giblet with a knife, to release the juices, and turn the works into a soup kettle with 3 quarts of consomme or water, boiling briskly. If you use water, add a good slug of meat extract for richness. Season with salt, pepper and a little cayenne. Let all simmer for 4 or 5 hours, then strain. Mash the liver only fine, and add them to the broth, boil 3 minutes, and serve hot.

Try it, and see if you don't agree with us that it's giblet good!

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SWEDISH SENSE . .

Here's an unusual stew that hails all the way from Sweden.

Get about 3 pounds stew meat—beef preferably—and cut in even sized pieces. Brown 2 or 3 onions, sliced, in about 3 tablespoons of butter. While that is going on, pound the meat well, and then brown the pieces in the fat with the onion. Have ready 10 raw potatoes, peeled and sliced, and put alternate layers of meat, potatoes and onions in a big kettle. The bottom and top layers should be potatoes. Season lavishly with salt and pepper. Run a little water into the frying pan, and pour the resulting liquid over the contents of the kettle. Cover the pot and simmer for about 3 hours. You may have to add more water during the cooking time.

Serve with hard Swedish bread.

It's sure fire if you want "something different".

LETTUCE LIFE . .

Give "life" to that dull everyday lettuce by cooking it for a new and interesting vegetable.

Take 2 or 3 firm heads of lettuce. Put the unopened heads in cold salted water for a quarter of an hour to kill any bugs. Pull off all wilted leaves and trim heads into neat form. Wash heads well and then plunge them into boiling salted water to blanch them—about 10 minutes. Drain, pour cold water over them and then press out all moisture.

Sprinkle the heads with salt and put them in a pan with enough beef stock or bouillon to cover them, adding ¼ stick of butter, ½ a cup of chopped onion, a few sprigs of parsley and a bit of cayenne. Simmer slowly for two hours. Then remove lettuce from the pan, thicken the remaining liquid with a little brown roux and pour over the lettuce as a sauce.

By MARION WALDEN
OTHER GIRLS COULD SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS, BUT NOT SALLY. OR SO IT SEEMED UNTIL SUDDENLY — SHE HAD THE RIGHT ANSWER, TOO.

SALLY rammed her fist against Uncle Bob's letter in the bottom of her coat pocket. She hated the letter. She wished it had never been written. She wished—she didn't quite know what she wished.

The postman had handed it to her just as she'd left home on her way to the drugstore. She'd read it eagerly while she was sipping a soda. When she came to the part—the awful part—she couldn't even drink the rest of the soda. She bought the shampoo Mom wanted, and started home. She decided she wouldn't tell Mom about the letter yet—not until she'd had time to get used to it, and could act nonchalant about it.

Uncle Bob had tried to make it sound fine. "She's just the kind of girl you're going to be when you 'grow up'," he'd written. Uncle Bob was the only one who could kid Sally about her height. He'd always say things about "when you grow up", and then she'd say, "For gosh sakes! Don't tell me I'm going to grow any more!"

Then he'd tell her things to prove it was nice to be tall. "There was that Juno," he'd say. "Quite a gal, I've heard." And he'd tell her of a movie star or two he was sure were at least as tall as Sally. She didn't feel too tall with Uncle Bob. He was six feet two, and she could stand straight, even with heels, and still only come to his ears.

Sally went into the house. "Here's your hair stuff," she said to Mom. She fingered the letter. If she didn't show it to Mom right away, it would take some explaining, which would only make it harder. "I got a letter from Uncle Bob," she said. "Some news! Cupid's darts—and all that sort of thing!"

"Oh, let me see it!" Mom exclaimed, setting the package down and reaching for the letter.

Sally had a chance to pull herself together while Mom read it. She hoped Mom wouldn't make remarks about how lonesome Sally would be now, or anything of that sort. Sally wasn't jealous of this unknown girl Uncle Bob was going to marry. It wasn't that. He was more like a big brother to her, and he was the only person she could always fall back on in any of her troubles, and she had expected him to come back and be with them always. He had lived with her and

Mom all the time he was going to the University and had spent his furloughs with them while he was in the army. This was the second year he had been away at Yale to get his degree, but Sally had surely expected him to come back. Now it seemed he wasn't even going to live near them. And all on account of this bride.

"Well!" Mom said, sort of breathlessly. "So Bob's getting married! I do hope this Edith's the right girl for him. I wonder if they'll have a big wedding. What on earth will we wear?"

Sally was distinctly relieved that Mom didn't notice her, didn't think what it was going to mean to her to lose Uncle Bob. It was some comfort not to listen to Mom's appeals about "pushing yourself if you expect to have a good time, and not depending on Uncle Bob to take you places." It was the truth, she realized. The last few years, since he'd been home only for vacations, had shown her how lonely it was. Mom thought she should make more effort to mix with her own crowd, but Mom didn't know how hard it was to be taller than any of the girls and taller than lots of the boys, and have everyone make remarks about it, so that you felt like a big lummox. Mom never found out—she didn't think of it, even after the dancing school affair, back in grade school.

The dancing school was torture because then Sally was way taller than any of the boys. She could always hear a slight snicker when any of the others glanced her way, but the time little Junior Peckham asked her for a dance was nothing short of horrible.

The teacher was nearby. "Do I have to?" Sally asked in desperation. The teacher was shocked at her manners and said so in loud terms. A wave of giggles swept across the room. That had been the end.

For a few times Sally had gone to a nearby movie during the dancing class hour and come out to wait at the ballroom door when Uncle Bob called to take her home. One evening the movie had been especially interesting, and she'd been a little late and had to confess to Uncle Bob. He'd helped her plead with Mom, and he'd given her private dancing lessons, and flattered her on her graceful dancing, and made everything fine. But school dances were still something she resisted strenuously, in spite of all Mom's urging.

Uncle Bob had taken her skiing winters and fishing summers, and she hadn't minded not palling around much with the other kids, not having dates. Now it was all over. She felt very much alone.

"Well," said Mom, laying down the letter, "we must get back to business, wedding or no wedding. Speaking of clothes, what are you planning on for the senior mixer? I think blue is your best color."

"Mom, you know I'm not going to the mixer. I haven't any date, and you don't have any fun unless you have a date."

"Nonsense. They said distinctly at the parents' meeting that it was not strictly a date affair. They wanted everyone to come. Now, I think something fluffy—— Then if we go to Bob's wedding——"

"Oh, Mom! Not fluffy, please! I hate to look fluffy. Besides, I'm not going to that dance. I'm a wallflower. Nobody asks me for a dance."

"Ross Ainsley asked you for two, you said, last time you went to a dance," Mom argued.

"Mom, tell me the truth. Didn't you ask his mom to ask him to ask me?"

"Now, Sally," soothed Mom, "every mother just does what she can to help her daughter." It was true. Mom studied styles that would make her look shorter, shopped for party shoes with not too high heels, and tried to build up Sally's pride with compliments about her fine complexion and lustrous blond hair. "I think you get them from your Swedish grandmother," she often said. "They say she was a great beauty."

Pete Anderson, their handy man, came up from the basement where he was fixing something and asked for some friction tape. Mom looked, but they didn't seem to have any. "Oh, dear," she sighed, "and all my borrowing neighbors are away from home. Sally, run over to the new people's, next door, and see if they have any. They have that boy. I'm sure he must use friction tape."

Sally felt a little rebellion rising again. Mom would have gone to borrow the tape herself, but this was another effort to shove Sally at the young people. She'd talked about this "nice-looking boy next door,

The dancing school was torture.

Jeff Albright, I heard his name is," since he'd moved in just a few days ago. However, there was nothing to do but go.

The worst always happened. Mrs. Albright didn't have any tape in the house, but thought there was some in the garage. Jeff was out in the garage, if Sally would just go out and ask him——

She might as well get it over with; report to Mom that she had met Jeff, but nothing came of it. Sally had seen Jeff from a distance before, but now she noticed that he had quite nice brown eyes, that more than made up for the stubborn brush of hair, cut crew-fashion. He was busy going over his fishing tackle.

"Gee, what a swell rod!" Sally enthused, after introducing herself and stating her errand. She hefted it while Jeff hunted for the tape.

"You fish?" he inquired.

"You bet," she assured him. She told him about Uncle Bob and their expeditions together. She told him about Lake Wheeler and the largemouthed bass there. She told him about the one who wouldn't take a frog dangled right in front of his nose, and then when she gave up and put a tiny hook with a worm on her line to try for sunfish, the huge bass leaped for it like lightning and hooked himself through the tough part of his jaw so she could land him.

"We took a picture of him and me," she said. "Sometime I'll show it to you. He was a prize!"

"Gee, I'd like to catch one," Jeff said. "Have you ever fished with dry flies?" He showed her some of his fanciest flies and recommended the sport. "Maybe I could teach you fly-casting this summer. Dad and I used to go together, but he's up in Alaska for all summer so we won't get in any. Mom can't stand fishing. She just cooks 'em for us."

Sally was suddenly embarrassed. This was just what she had intended not to do, try to push an acquaintance. She took the tape, and when she went home didn't tell Mom anything but that she had met the new neighbors and they seemed all right.

Next day Mom kept persisting about the Spring dance, and at school, during lunch hour, some of the girls brought it up, too. Ellen May Upper, probably the most glamorous girl in the senior class; had an exciting date with Don Wood, who was currently the most likely to succeed in stirring up heart throbs.

"He's a little tall for me," Ellen May observed. She herself was exactly the right height and so slender that she seemed the petite type. "He'd be tall enough for *you*, Sally."

Sally felt a mile high and tried to slouch down. This was always happening. She wished she coulo think of something to say. She always used to say, on

"Mom, tell me the truth."

occasions like this, that she wouldn't be going to the dance—Uncle Bob wanted to take her somewhere else. Her mind groped for a change of subject, and she said, "My Uncle Bob is going to get married." No one was much interested, and she felt like a dope.

A teacher, in charge of newspaper publicity, came to their group and told Ellen May that the Times camera man was here to take her picture. She was to be the Spirit of Something-or-other in a school pageant later on.

"Oh, I simply can't today," Ellen May protested. "I have this simply gruesome cold sore on the corner of my lip."

"Come, that's a minor malady," the teacher insisted, and drew Ellen May unwillingly away.

A minor malady. Just a cold sore you couldn't see two yards away. Ellen May probably had no idea how it felt to stick up a head taller than anyone around you. You could see that two blocks away. You could see it all over a dance floor. A girl's head, way above everyone else. Her partner barely able to see over her shoulder. You got over a cold sore. There was nothing you could do, ever, about being tall. You were that way the rest of your life.

Mom had asked her to pick up some friction tape

on her way home from school, and when she got home, Mom wanted her to take it back to the Albrights. "I think you should go over, Mom, and make her acquaintance," Sally suggested hopefully.

"I will, soon," Mom said, "but my hair's in curlers now, and it's too soon to take it down. Run along. It won't hurt you."

She met Jeff wheeling his bicycle down the walk. "That's a keen bike," she said. "Mine is the same color, but it's got a soft tire now."

"Mine has, too," Jeff said. "I was just going to walk it down to the repair shop. Why don't you take your's along?"

"Okay," she answered. "Here's the friction tape. You put it away while I wheel out my bike."

She was rather surprised at herself for wanting to go—and then for having a good time. It seemed rather like old times with Uncle Bob. You could just talk about skiing and fishing and bicycles, and forget about not looking like other people and about "pushing yourself."

"My mom wants me to go to that dance the class is having," Jeff remarked as they pedaled back homeward. "I'd have fun getting acquainted with the kids, but the trouble is, I can't dance very good—well, I guess I should say."

"I could prob'ly teach you. It could be a trade for the fly-casting lessons. Have you got a record-player?" Sally had one, but she wasn't ready to have Jeff do anything like that over at her house. Mom would make her feel self-conscious, might think Sally was trying to "push herself."

Jeff said he had a record-player. They could practice in his kitchen. They could do it right now. Mrs. Albright thought it was a good idea and left them to their own devises.

"Gee, this is kind of fun," Jeff admitted, after a few swings around. "It seems easy with you. But I don't think I'll go to that mixer, anyway. I could never get up nerve to ask a girl, unless—Oh, but I s'pose you've had a date long before this."

"Boy, you just asked a girl!" Sally said, and they both laughed.

They danced through several records, and suddenly Sally wondered why she hadn't given a thought to their comparative heights.

"How tall are you, anyway?" she asked. "I'm a giraffe."

"Five-eleven," Jeff replied. "And I don't think you are at all."

"I'm five-ten," Sally sighed. Heels would more than eat up the difference. But somehow it didn't seem to matter too much. Somehow it seemed a very minor malady. There were so many more interesting things.

"Say," said Jeff, "you never showed me the picture of you and that monster you caught on the sunfish hook."

"I'll go get it," Sally said. She ran across the lawn and through the house.

"Where on earth have you been?" Mom asked.

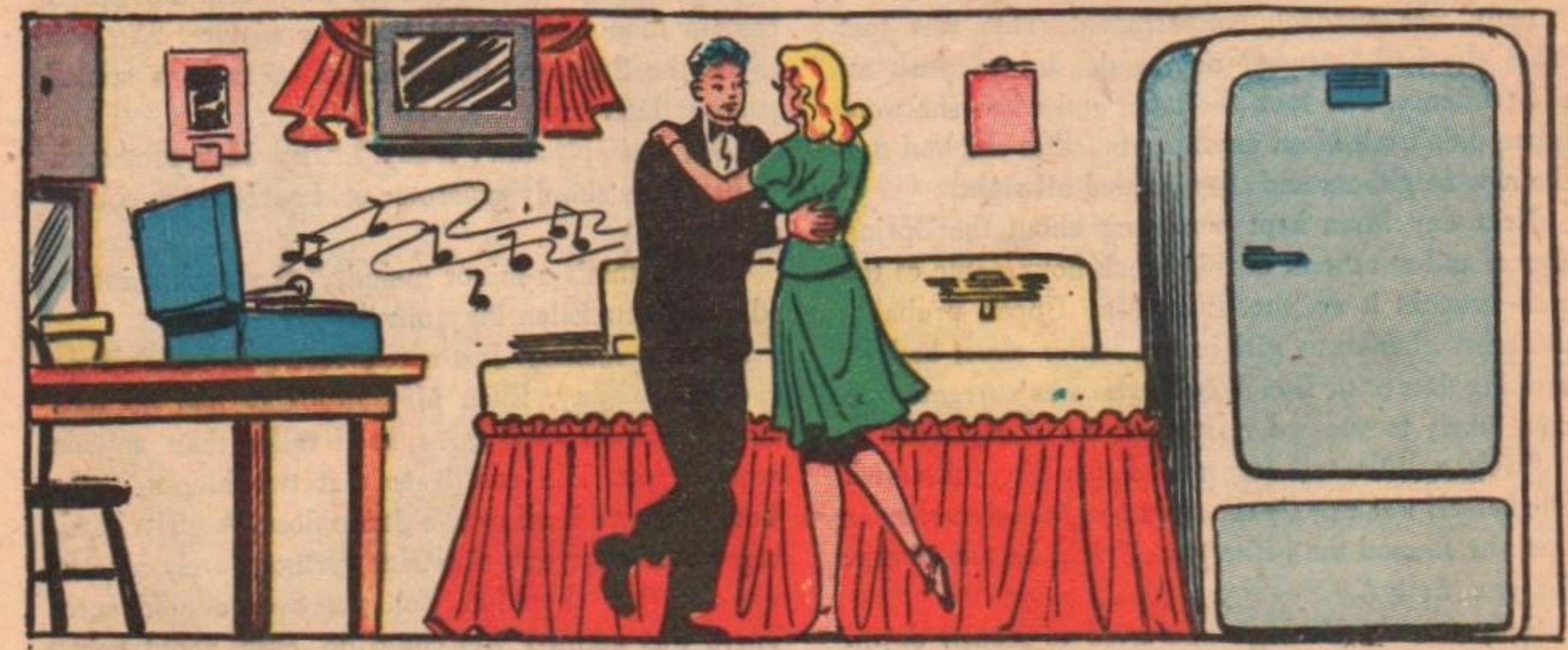
"Oh, just getting acquainted with the neighbors," Sally replied. "By the way, Mom, I guess blue would be all right for that new dress, but not fluffy, please. Just something slick and simple."

"You mean a dress for Bob's wedding, or——" Mom's mouth dropped open.

"I mean for the mixer," Sally said as she rummaged for the snapshot. "We'd better let Uncle Bob's Edith plan about the wedding."

As she ran out the door with the fish picture, it occurred to her that it might be fun after all—having an Aunt Edith.

THE END



"I could never get up nerve to ask a girl, unless——"

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HOLLISTER WHITE COMPANY, Dept. 385
215 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill.

PATSY WALKER

IN "HER DELIGHTFUL DILEMMA!"

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THE PET YOUR UNCLE IS SENDING FROM AFRICA WILL *FIT* IN THERE?

OH, IT'LL FIT! AFTER ALL IT'S PROBABLY A DOG! AND EVEN IF IT'S A GREAT DANE, THIS IS BIG ENOUGH!

PRINCE

P

2825

NOW REALLY, BUZZIE DEAR, YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT THAT **I** AM WAY ABOVE PATSY SOCIALLY! AFTER ALL, MY FAMILY ***TREE*** IS THE ***FINEST*** IN TOWN!

SODA

BUZZ! WAIT'LL YOU HEAR! I'VE GOT WONDERFUL NEWS! MOTHER AND DAD ARE GIVING A PARTY AND ALL THE MOST ***IMPORTANT*** PEOPLE WILL ***BE*** THERE!

SPECIAL

IMPORTANT PEOPLE? POOH! WHO OF ANY IMPORTANCE WOULD GO TO **YOUR** HOUSE?

ONLY THE **MAYOR** AND **SENATOR** FOG, THAT'S ALL! SO POOH TO **YOU,** MISS WOLFE!

WELL, I'LL JUST BET THE PARTY IS A FLOP! AFTER ALL, WHAT WOULD **YOUR** FAMILY KNOW ABOUT PROPERLY ENTERTAINING PEOPLE OF IMPORTANCE? HUMPH!

DON'T LET HER GET YOU DOWN, PATSY!

YES! I'M SURE THE PARTY WILL BE **THE** SOCIAL EVENT OF THE SEASON!

THANKS, KIDS! I'VE GOT TO RUN ALONG NOW AND HELP MOTHER CLEAN UP!

LATER...

PATSY, DEAR, SEE WHO THAT IS!

O.K., MOTHER!

RRRING!

WHY, YES! THIS IS THE WALKER RESIDENCE!

O.K., BOYS, THIS IS IT!

B-BUT THERE MUST BE SOME **MISTAKE!** WHOSE STUFF IS THIS?

DON'T ASK ME, LADY! ALL I KNOW IS THIS IS THE ADDRESS IT GOES TO!

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHOM IT'S FROM, MOTHER?

I HAVE, BUT IT'S *TOO HORRIBLE* A THOUGHT! LET'S HOPE I'M WRONG! NOW WHO IS *THAT?*

RRRING!

A TELEGRAM? FROM *WHOM?*

OH, NO! IT *CAN'T* BE! BUT IT IS! JUST WHAT I SUSPECTED! QUICK, PATSY -- CALL YOUR FATHER! I FEEL FAINT!

THIS IS *TERRIBLE!* WHAT'LL WE DO? *HE'LL RUIN* EVERYTHING!

I WAS HOPING AGAINST HOPE! BUT I KNEW IT WAS HE AS SOON AS I SAW THAT *JUNK!*

PUHLEESE! WON'T ANYONE TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?

PATSY, YOU MAY AS WELL KNOW ALL! YOUR UNCLE *BARNEY* IS COMING HERE TODAY! HE'S MY "BLACK SHEEP" BROTHER WHO LEFT HOME YEARS AGO TO TRAMP AROUND THE WORLD! HE'S ARRIVING TONIGHT IN TIME TO RUIN THE PARTY!

I DON'T THINK HE'LL BE THAT BAD! AFTER ALL, HE *IS* A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY, AND--

BEFORE YOU SAY ANY MORE, LOOK AT THIS PICTURE I FOUND IN THE ATTIC!

OH!

Love, Barney

WAIT! THERE IS ONE WAY OUT! PATSY, YOU MEET UNCLE BARNEY AT THE DEPOT AND STALL HIM TILL THE PARTY'S OVER!

A SWELL IDEA! I'LL GET NANCY TO **HELP** ME!

LATER AT THE SODA PARLOR...

AND THAT'S THE WHOLE STORY! WE MUST KEEP HIM AWAY FROM THE PARTY OR THE WALKERS ARE **FINISHED** SOCIALLY!

GOLLY! I DON'T **BLAME** YOU! HE WON'T BE HARD TO RECOGNIZE WITH THOSE OLD CLOTHES AND THE MOTH EATEN WHISKERS!

HMMM... SO HE'D RUIN THE WALKERS SOCIALLY, EH? WELL, I'M GLAD HE WON'T BE HARD TO RECOGNIZE, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE PERFECT DESCRIPTION YOU GAVE ME, NANCY "DEAR!"

I'LL JUST GET DOWN TO THE DEPOT FIRST AND MAKE SURE PATSY'S UNCLE GETS **TO THE PARTY ON TIME!**

TESSIE
MILLIE
GEORGIE
FRANKI
MISS AMERICA
MISS AMER
JUNIOR MISS
HEDY

MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY AT THE CENTERVILLE FREIGHT YARD...

--AND DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU ON THESE FREIGHTS AGAIN!

COME ON, FEET-- **RUN!**

ER, PARDON ME, GOILIE! I'M LOOKING FOR ME RICH RELATIVES IN DIS TOWN! I WONDER IF YOUSE COULD DIRECT ME TO--

HUH?

WHAT LUCK! HE'S THE ONE!

CENTERVILLE

YOU BET I CAN! I KNOW JUST WHOM YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AND I'LL TAKE YOU TO THEM AT ONCE!

WELL! DIS IS NICE! I DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH NICE SOIVICE!

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE DEPOT...

GEE, NANCY, EVERYONE HAS GOTTEN OFF THE TRAIN, BUT *NO* UNCLE BARNEY!

WE'VE GOT THE PICTURE! LET'S ASK IF ANYONE HAS *SEEN* HIM!

PATSY, THERE'S A DISTINGUISHED LOOKING PASSENGER! WHY NOT ASK HIM?

OH, I DON'T THINK HE'D KNOW ANYONE LIKE UNCLE BARNEY!

PARDON ME, SIR! DID YOU BY ANY CHANCE HAPPEN TO SEE ANYONE WHO LOOKS LIKE *THIS* ON BOARD?

WHAT THE--! HAW, HAW, HAW!

I DON'T THINK YOU'RE VERY POLITE, SIR! EVEN THOUGH MY UNCLE BARNEY IS--ER--POOR, THAT'S NO REASON TO LAUGH AT HIM!

UNCLE BARNEY, EH? THEN YOU MUST BE LITTLE PATSY!

B- BUT HOW'D *YOU* KNOW?

BLESS YOU, CHILD, FOR STICKING UP FOR YOUR OLD UNCLE BARNEY WHOM YOU'VE NEVER SEEN! YOU'RE LOOKING AT HIM RIGHT NOW THOUGH! *I AM YOUR UNCLE BARNEY!*

CENTERVILLE

YOU? UNCLE BARNEY? BUT THIS PICTURE!

IT'S YEARS OLD! SINCE THAT WAS TAKEN, I'VE STRUCK IT RICH! I OWN SEVERAL DIAMOND MINES IN AFRICA! I'M NOW KNOWN AS "DIAMOND BARNEY!"

MEANWHILE...

I'LL BET YOUR RICH RELATIVES WILL BE "THRILLED" WHEN THEY SEE YOU!

I CAN'T RIGHTLY SAY! I AIN'T SEEN 'EM FOR SO LONG, I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE!

WELL, STANLEY, SO FAR SO GOOD! ALL THE GUESTS ARE HERE AND HAVING A GRAND TIME!

THERE'S THE DOOR BELL! I'LL GET IT!

RRRING!

BROTHER-IN-LAW! THE WANDERER HATH RETURNED!

YIPES! IT'S BARNEY!

MY WORD!

BROTHER-IN-LAW!

THEN HE MUST BE MRS. WALKER'S BROTHER!

MY GOODNESS! HOW TERRIBLE!

WHAT A CREATURE!

I FEEL FAINT! I KNEW HE'D LOOK BAD -- B-BUT NOT THAT BAD! OHH-H-H-H..

WHERE'S MY BEAUTIFUL SISTER? SLURP!

RRRING

NOW WHAT?

MOM! DAD! LOOK! WE'VE GOT UNCLE BARNEY!

BARNEY? BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! WE'VE GOT BARNEY RIGHT HERE!

BARNEY? WHO--ME? YOUSE IS CRAZY! ME NAME IS LOOIE!

AN' WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? I'M LOOKING FOR ME RICH BROTHER-IN-LAW--J. B. WOLFE! NOW IS DIS OR IS IT NOT DE WOLFE RESIDENCE?

WHAT? THAT'S WONDERFUL! PATSY WILL TAKE YOU THERE AT ONCE!

--AND, FOLKS, "DIAMOND BARNEY" NEVER VISITS WITHOUT BRINGING A FEW BAUBLES FOR EVERYBODY!

QUICK--CALL THE NEWSPAPERS! IT'S THE "DIAMOND BARNEY" HIMSELF!

JUST ONE MORE PICTURE, SIR!

WILL YOU TELL US OF YOUR EXPLOITS IN AFRICA, SIR?

GLADLY, SON!

LOOKS LIKE YOUR PARTY IS A GREAT SUCCESS!

THANKS TO BARNEY! I'M SO GLAD HE TURNED INTO SUCH A WONDERFUL MAN!

MEANWHILE...

AND YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN WHAT A TRAMP PATSY'S UNCLE WAS!

HEDY! I THINK YOU'RE BEING UNFAIR!

WELL, I TOLD YOU THE PARTY WOULD BE A FLOP! THE WALKERS ARE LIKE THEIR UNCLE AND THEY SHOULD LEAVE IMPORTANT THINGS LIKE SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT TO FAMILIES LIKE MINE WHO KNOW HOW TO DO IT!

WELL, WELL! LOOK WHO'S HERE! HOW DID THE PARTY GO, PATSY, OR DID YOU HAVE ***RELATIVE*** TROUBLE? HA! HA! HA!

THE PARTY WAS A HUGE SUCCESS, HEDY DEAR! AND HERE'S THE LATEST EDITION TO PROVE IT!

DAILY BUGLE

"DIAMOND BARNEY," FAMOUS ADVENTURER, IS RELATIVE OF THE WALKERS"

BROTHER-IN-LAW OF J. B. WOLFE TRIES TO CRASH WALKER PARTY. HE IS A WELL KNOWN HOBO.

MAYOR AND SENATOR ALSO ATTEND PARTY

MR. WOLFE'S BROTHER-IN-LAW

MR. WOLFE IS NOW RECOVERING FROM SHOCK AND MRS. WOLFE HAS LEFT TOWN FOR A FEW

"DIAMOND BARNE

GIVEN BY THE WALKERS WHICH WAS A HUGE SUCCESS. DUH

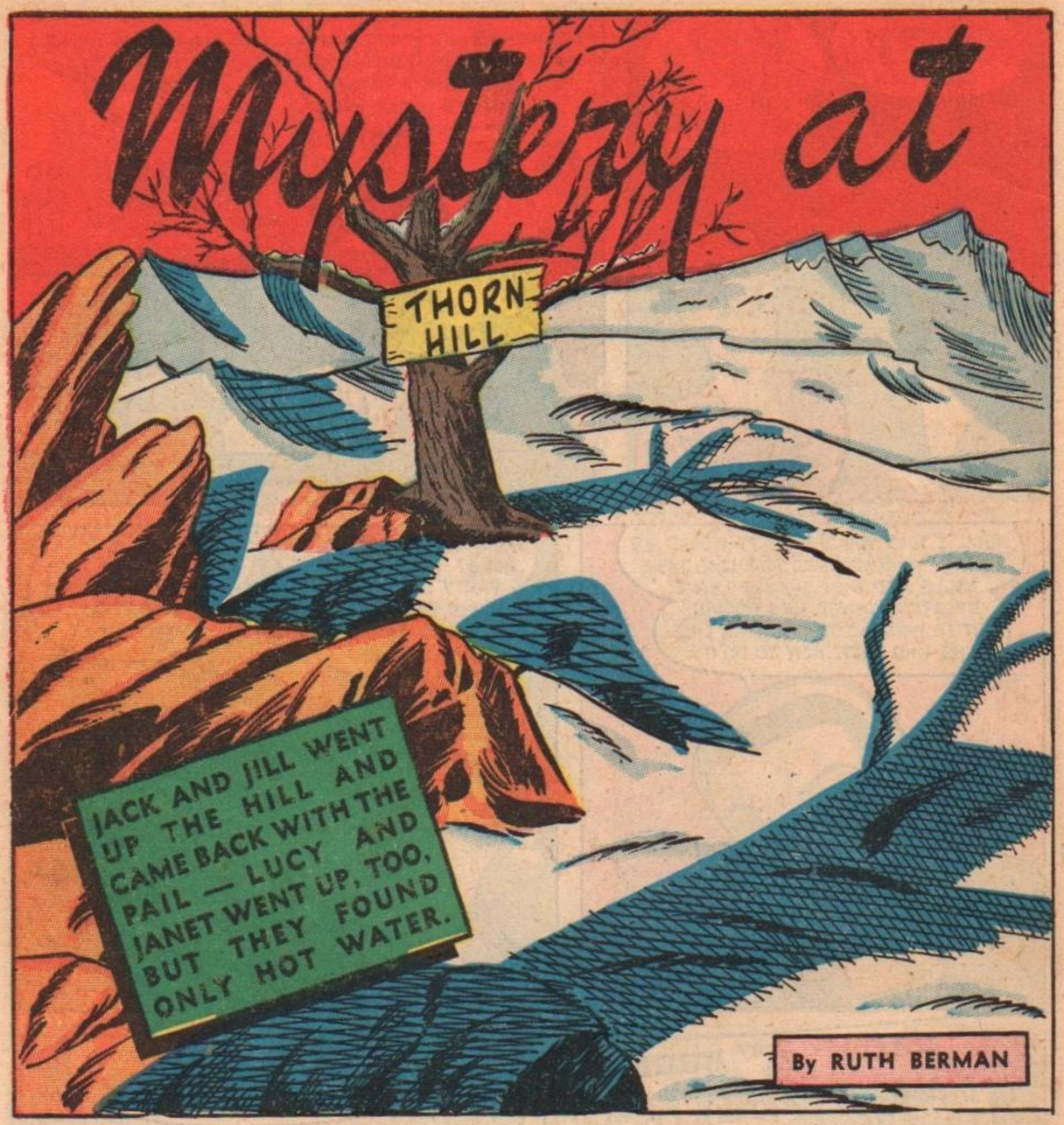
8

OHHHH!

HA, HA! LOOKS LIKE THE WOLFE FAMILY ***TREE*** HAS A ***MONKEY*** IN IT! HA, HA, HA!

THE END

Mystery at THORN HILL


THORN HILL
JACK AND JILL WENT UP THE HILL AND CAME BACK WITH THE PAIL — LUCY AND JANET WENT UP, TOO, BUT THEY FOUND ONLY HOT WATER.
By RUTH BERMAN

LUCY ALBRIGHT parked her skis outside the Taitlow garage, pushed back the sliding doors and stamped inside. Compared to the crisp, bright winter air outside, the garage was warm and dark. Lucy blinked her eyes. Over in the corner, she could make out three figures huddled around a small radio set.

"This is a fine way to go skiing," she greeted her friends. "You look like a bunch of underground spies."

"Ssh, we're listening." That was Johnny Taitlow, Lucy's secret heart throb. He pointed to an empty spot on the bench beside him and went on fiddling with the controls of the radio set. He'd built it at the high school workshop, and it was his pet hobby this winter.

Suddenly a voice burst forth from the static on the radio. The man was speaking with a breathless urgency that somehow belied his words. He was merely giving a recipe for a concoction which he called "Thornhill Delight." "Ten eggs, beaten stiff and straight. Add twelve cups of milk, twelve teaspoons of sugar, nine cups of mushrooms. Stir until no liquid left in the bottom of the bowl. Pour into sixteen molds and freeze until right consistency. Serves ten." The voice went dead after that.

THORN HILL

"Sounds more like Thornhill Repulse." Lucy was on her feet. "Come on. Let's go skiing."

"You girls go ahead," Jim suggested. "Johnny and I have to stick around here for a while. The FCC agent is coming by this afternoon again."

"For Pete's sake!" Lucy sat down again, glaring at Johnny. "First I have a radio for competition and now it's the FCC, whatever that is. Besides, you boys promised to come with Janet and me this afternoon."

"We can't, kid." Johnny pulled Lucy up by the hands and swung her gently around toward the door. "Janet will explain on the way. And Jim and I will see you girls later."

"Oh, all right," Lucy agreed grudgingly. She couldn't stay angry with Johnny for more than sixty seconds all at once. "Come on, Jan."

Janet and Lucy took the streetcar to the outskirts of town and headed for the big hill past the Centerville forest. On the way Janet told Lucy what the boys were up to.

Shortly after Johnny had set his radio up in the garage, she explained, he had tuned in a station that wasn't supposed to be there at all. Periodically a man's voice would cut into the static, like this afternoon, usually with some sort of queer recipe. Johnny finally contacted the Federal Communications Commission, which had a listing of every legal radio outlet in the country. This one, as Johnny suspected, wasn't on the list. An FCC agent began to work on the mystery and was coming over this afternoon for further investigation. He was trying to take a fix on the unknown station. Taking a fix, Janet went on, meant that you tracked down the exact location of a transmitter with all sorts of technical instruments like long-range and mobile interference detectors. Then you could check up and find out why the station wasn't registered with the FCC.

Lucy grew thoughtful as Janet talked. She remained silent all the while they were whizzing down the track and trudging up again. Finally, when they reached the top of the hill for the fifth time, she confided to Janet.

"You know that recipe we heard this afternoon?—Well, it just doesn't add up to anything you could eat. I'll bet it's a code. And that's why the FCC doesn't have a listing for that station."

"Could be." Janet whirled around on her skis and got set for the descent. "Coming?"

But Lucy was pointing to an old, weatherbeaten sign tacked to a tree at the top of the hill. "Thorn Hill!" She stared at Janet, her lips tight. "That was what he called that recipe. Golly, if it *is* a code, I'll bet this hill has something to do with it."

"I never knew the hill had a name before," whispered Janet.

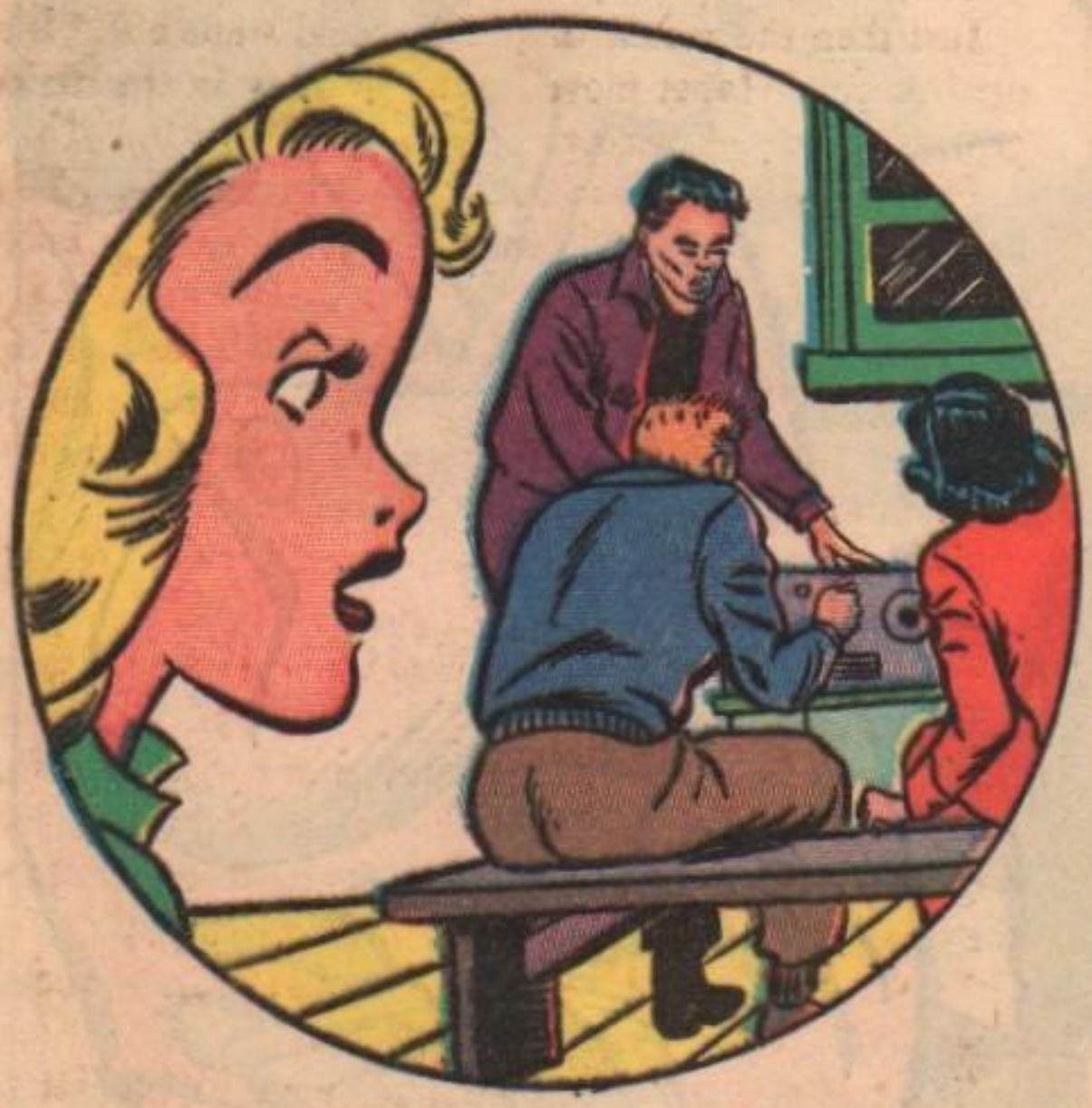
"Neither did I." Lucy adjusted her ski strap. "But the boys ought to hear about this right away. We can ski down to the bottom of the hill, swing past the woods, and catch the trolley on the other side. It's faster that way."

It was beginning to snow as the two girls zipped down the hill. By the time they had covered half the distance back to the Centerville trolley, the snow had turned to hail. A high wind whipped the pellets of ice into angry masses that bit into their bare cheeks. They joined hands to help each other along, but the storm increased in fury.

"It's no use," Janet moaned helplessly. "We're not making any progress at all. There must be some place we can go for shelter until this blows over."

"The game warden's hut." Lucy's words came out in gasps of exhaustion. "It's over there, back of those big trees." Still clutching Janet's hand, she swerved to the right and into the forest.

Ten minutes later, with their skis leaning against the wall of the cabin, Janet and Lucy stumbled to the heavy log door. Luckily, it wasn't locked. The key was in the lock in the inside. But the cabin was deserted. It consisted of one room, built entirely of logs, with a tiny round window cut into one wall. There were dry logs in the fireplace, and Janet found a package of matches on the mantel. Shivering and disheveled, she and Lucy crouched by the fireplace, grateful for the warmth of the crackling flames.



"This is a fine way to go skiing," she greeted her friends. "You look like a bunch of underground spies."

After a while Janet straightened up and sniffed the air. "What a peculiar smell!" She made a wry face. "What do you suppose it is?"

"I don't know." Lucy hesitated. "It smells as if something's dead around here."

Janet's eyes widened. "And there's something alive outside. Hear that whistling?" She reached for Lucy's hand and gripped it tightly.

Lucy cocked her head to one side, listening. "You're right," she whispered, "and it's pretty close. You can hear it through the wind and hail and everything."

The two girls stared at each other for a moment, too frightened to move. Then Lucy broke away, running for the tiny window. Before she reached it, however, she tripped in the middle of the room and fell with a thud.

Janet raced up behind her. "It's a trap door!" She pointed to the floor. "Somebody left the handle sticking up, and you tripped on it." She pulled at the door, and it came up easily, but she dropped it again with a crash. "Ugh, that awful smell is coming from down there."

"Ssh!" Lucy put her finger to her lips. The whistling outside had stopped, and men's voices sounded just beyond the cabin.

"They'd never suspect the game warden," one of the men was saying in a deep, husky voice. "If anyone discovers what's going on inside the hut, Joe will take care of them."

"Right," the other man answered. "Let's get in out of this storm."

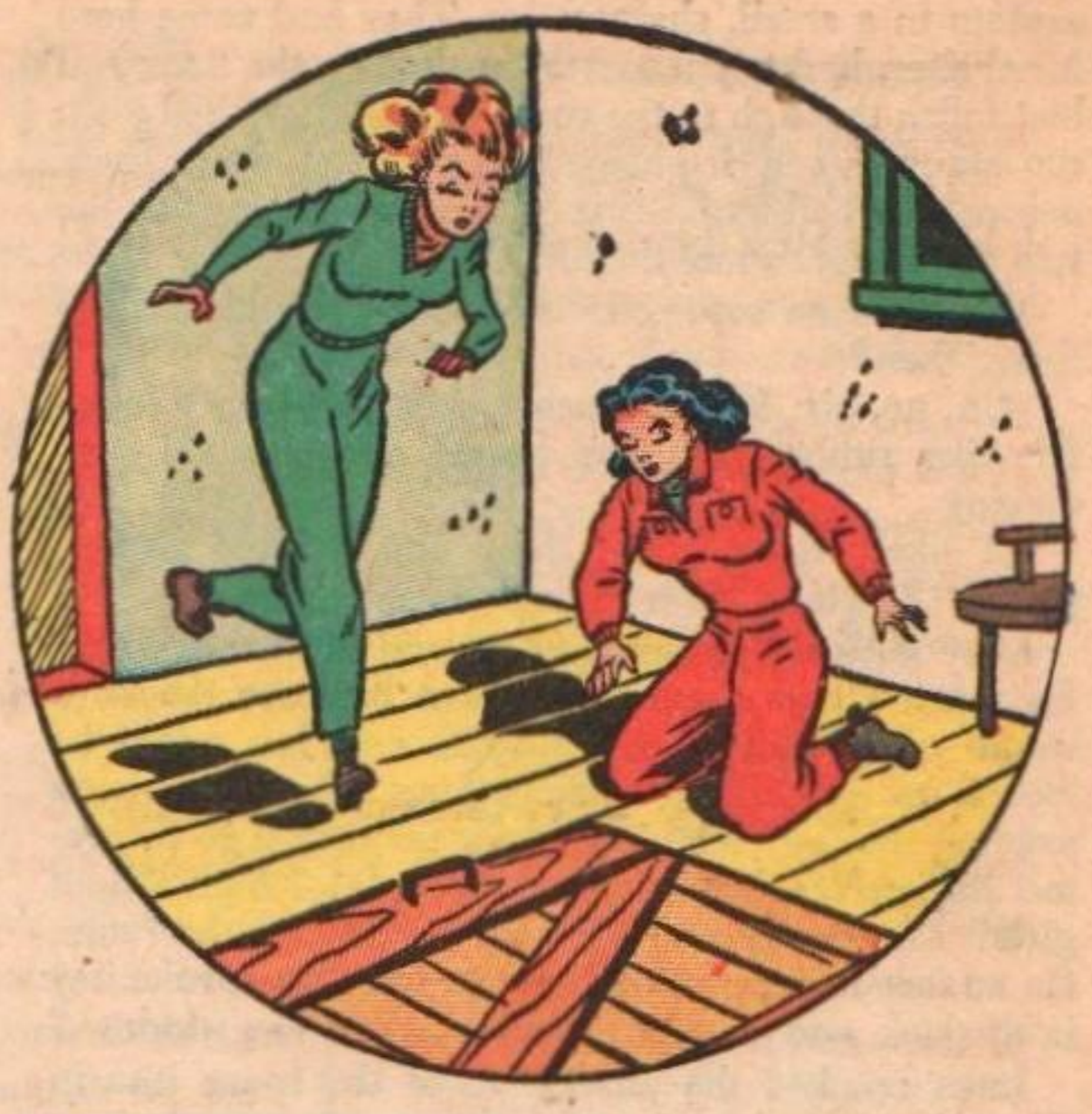
Quick as a flash, Lucy pulled up the trap door, shoved Janet ahead of her, and pulled the door down over their heads. Cautiously, they walked down five wooden steps. "Matches," she hissed. "Have you got any?"

"Yes." Janet's voice was trembling uncontrollably. "I put them in my pocket after I lit the fire." She lit one, revealing a small, unpainted room. In one corner were two large burlap bags. Right opposite stood a radio transmitter, somewhat like Johnny's.

Lucy kicked at the bags as Janet lit another watch. "Dead beavers!" Her horrified gasp filled the little room. "It's illegal to trap them now."

The big door above creaked open on its hinges, and heavy footsteps sounded overhead. Both girls shuddered—it would only be minutes before the men realized that someone had stumbled into their hideaway. Telltale skis lay outside the hut, and a newly built fire blazed in the fireplace.

"Quick, give me the matches." Lucy struck one and faced the radio transmitter. "I've watched Johnny fiddle with his old set enough. I ought to be able to figure it out," she muttered, her face taut with determination. "Here, Jan, hold the matches for me." She worked desperately, playing with the controls. "There, I guess that means it's sending." And quickly she tapped out an SOS in Morse code—one, two, three times. "Pray, Jan," she pleaded, "pray that Johnny and Jim are listening."



Janet raced up behind her. "It's a trap door!"

Upstairs, the unintelligible mumble of men's voices grew loud. They seemed to be arguing about something.

"Lucy, look!" Janet pointed a trembling finger at the book on the floor next to the radio. It was an open cookbook, and in the midst of some of the recipes were written the words, "Straight, right and left."

Lucy nodded grimly. "The recipe code."

Just then the match in Janet's hand went out. "It's the last one." Janet moved close to Lucy in the darkness. She was shivering.

The voices above had suddenly stopped. Then they began again. Footsteps could be heard, moving back and forth.

"This is the place the FCC and the boys are looking for all right," whispered Lucy. "Only they don't know where it is yet. And we're here, right in the middle of an illegal beaver trapping racket."

"What if they find us down here?" Janet was almost sobbing. "What are we going to do?"

Before Lucy could answer, there was a shout above, and the trap door was flung open. Light filled the little room below, and Lucy and Janet were yanked roughly up the steps. Blinded by the light and too frightened to speak, they clung together in front of the fireplace, facing two angry, red-faced men.

"Two little runts!" the short, squat man sounded disgusted. "Now what do we do?"

The tall one with the husky voice shook his fist at the girls. "What are you two kids doing here?" he demanded harshly.

Lucy swallowed the lump of fear in her throat. They had been caught in the storm, she managed to

explain in a small, shaky voice. They had come here for shelter, had tripped over the door in the floor and had fallen through to the room below. They had been too stunned and frightened to move at first. Then, before they had had a chance to collect their wits, the two men had found them.

The tall man softened. "Didn't see anything down there, then?"

"Oh, no, sir. It was much too dark." Lucy's knees felt like rubber, but she hoped she sounded convincing.

"A likely story." The short one reached for his jacket. "I'll take them to Joe. He'll handle this."

Lucy felt cold shivers run up and down her spine. He mustn't take them away from here, or the boys would never find them. And she and Jan might be locked up or tortured or something. These men were evading the law. Who knew how far they'd go to protect themselves, even against a couple of high school girls? Frantically, her eyes darted around the room. On an impulse, she dived for the door, turned the key in the lock, and shouted, "Quick, Janet. The window."

Janet reached the other side of the room just in time to catch the key, as Lucy tossed it past the two men. She turned and flung it out as far into the snow as she could.

That did it. The men lunged for the girls. There were growls of "the little brats" and "tie 'em up". Rough fingers dug into Lucy's shoulders, and she was flung into a chair with her hands tied behind her back and rope cutting into her legs. Janet struggled across from her, bound in the same way and with tears shining in her blue eyes. Their captors began banging at the hinges of the door with logs. It was their only way out. The window was too small for either to crawl through.

Lucy's heart was pounding like a trip hammer. She had played a desperate game to gain time, and now she could only pray that Johnny had heard her message, that the FCC agent could take a fix fast enough to locate them, and that the door would hold firm until help arrived.

Lucy didn't know how long it took, but one of the hinges seemed to be giving way slightly. The two men stopped for a moment to rest their aching muscles—and suddenly there were shouts outside. A shot rang out. Fists beat against the door. And Lucy screamed —screamed as loud as she could. The door gave way and fell in with a crash. The two men jumped back, and policemen swarmed into the cabin. When Lucy saw Johnny and Jim cross the threshold, tears of relief welled up in her eyes. Everything happened so quickly after that that she couldn't keep track of it all.

But, at her and Janet's direction, the police found the beavers, the illegal transmitter, and the cookbook. The men confessed quickly. The tall one was the game warden. He and the others had been trapping beavers out of season. Since his cabin was too risky a meeting place, they used the radio to communicate with Joe, their boss. The code told him where to pick up the loot. It was all clear in the book. Eggs stiff and straight meant that many paces straight ahead. The next numbers up to the word, left, added up to that many paces to the left. The numbers after that added up to paces to the right. Thornhill Delight meant that the sign at the top of Thorn Hill was the starting place. And "serves ten" signified any time after "ten o'clock."

"It's all so simple, isn't it, when you know about it?" Janet marveled on the way back to Centerville. The police had gone ahead with the trappers.

"Just the kind of stuff you read in books about buried treasure," Jim agreed.

The weather had cleared now, and the sun was setting in bright orange and red behind the white snow-topped trees

Johnny draped his arm carelessly around Lucy's shoulders. He slowed his pace, letting Janet and Jim move on ahead. "That was a brain storm of yours, Lucy," he congratulated her, "to send that SOS. The FCC agent was at the garage with us right then. It was all he needed to get a complete fix." He squeezed her hand fondly. "I didn't know there was a woman alive who was beautiful and bright, too."

Lucy dimpled happily. "You've been fiddling around with that radio so much, you didn't even know there was a woman alive period!" she teased gaily.

"There almost wasn't!" Johnny grinned into her eyes. "After this, you'd better have a bodyguard, and I guess I'm elected."

Lucy smiled back at him, weary but contented. It had all been worth it, she told herself, just to have Johnny look at her like that. THE END

Lucy's heart was pounding like a trip hammer.

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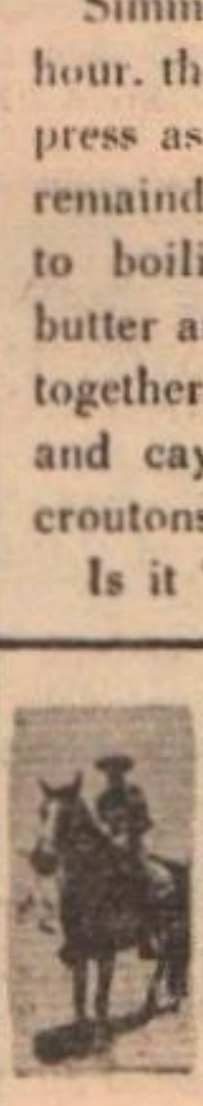

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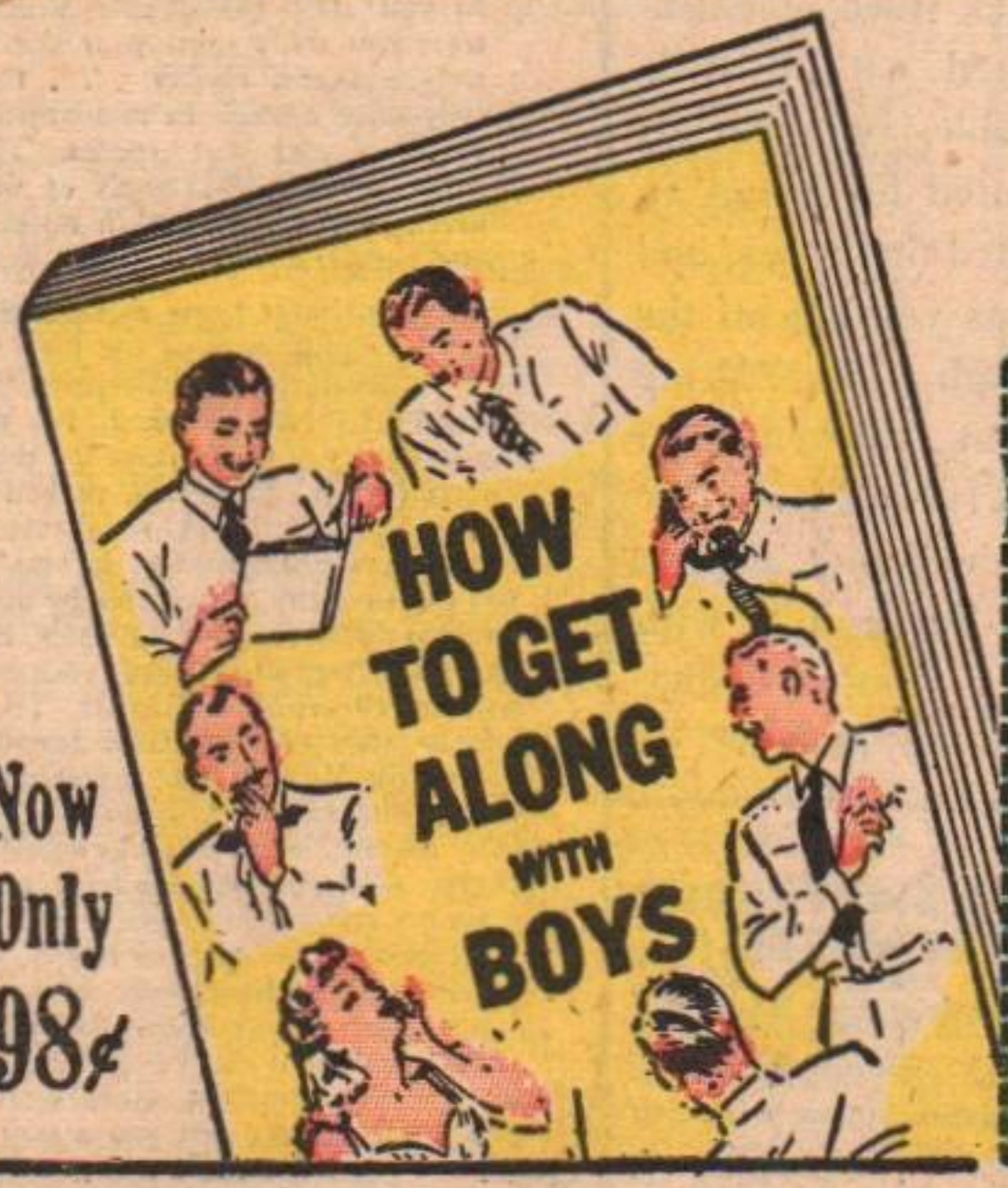

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